

LIFE AND LETTERS TO-DAY

continuing

The LONDON MERCURY and BOOKMAN

Edited by ROBERT HERRING

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NO. 29

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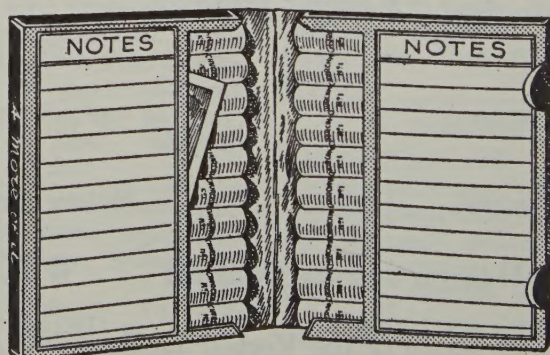
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The Editor is glad to consider manuscripts though he cannot enter into correspondence on unsolicited contributions. All manuscripts should be accompanied by a stamped address envelope.

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NOTES' ON NEW CONTRIBUTORS

HERBERT JONES describes himself as "34 and not a minute to lose". He has written many articles and reviews for technical printing journals, has published a book on typographical lay-out, *Type in Action*, and is now half-way through a novel.

G. R. N. LIST, who has previously only reviewed for this journal, is the author of *Pub Survey* (Brendin Publishing Company).

W. H. AUDEN has not contributed to *Life and Letters* for some years. He sent, from America, where he now is, this and another poem which will follow in February, "The Prophets."

LAWRENCE LEE is editor of *The Virginia Quarterly Review* and author of two volumes of verse, *Summer Goes On* (1933) and *Monticello and Other Poems* (1937).

ANNABEL FARJEON is twenty and has been in the Sadler's Wells ballet since 1934. She has just completed a novel.

The following are previous contributors, and last appeared in the number after their names : Willy Ley (20), E. Shrewsbury (26), George Ewart Evans (22), Oswald Blakeston (26), Winifred Graham Wilson (21).



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the reason why you should read

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BY

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LIFE AND LETTERS TO-DAY

continuing

The LONDON MERCURY and BOOKMAN

Edited by ROBERT HERRING

JANUARY

EDITORIAL

1940

INNOCENTS HAVE BEEN massacred before now and in terms of countries there is no doubt that the small are a provocation to the big. If they do not directly provoke them, they can be an excuse for one power to provoke another, and worse still, through help, or in the modern manner, through promises, they can be used by one power themselves to provoke another—to find themselves deserted when it comes to it, and beaten before they begin.

Finland has not—yet—found herself beaten. Though small, she has shown herself far from weak. She has shown, also, something too often forgotten in this dark world—that to repay debts with deeds earns the respect of the world. We, who have stumbled from one paper promise to another, even yet wonder that our prestige has likewise only paper value. The feeling for the Finns has been admiring, and it is perhaps something that such a feeling can still be aroused.

But we must not forget that Finland is, geographically as in other ways, in an awkward position. It is awkward for Russia to have Finland for a neighbour. We may laugh at Finnish guns threatening Leningrad, but Russia could legitimately feel threatened by the fact that other nations might take a hand in Finnish affairs (Germany

itself helped the Finns against Russia in that war of Finnish independence in which a British Expeditionary Force drove the Finns from their own soil, to the Norwegian frontier). It is awkward for any big country to have as neighbour one that cannot look after itself and may be looked after by others. Equally, it is awkward for any small country to be neighbour of one in an expansionist mood. We may be sorry for the Finns, but it is merely that their country is in an unfortunate position. Whilst the world is run as it is, it, and lands like it, always will be. But we dare not be emotional about Finland. If we are emotional, we side-track ourselves. We agree that it is appalling that the Russians should use Poles and other prisoners as a living shield, but we are liable to rejoice when we read that the Russians themselves, huddling round fires against the cold, present an easy target for Finnish marksmen. As fact, apart from feeling, each is as lamentable. It is well that the Finns are good marksmen, but only on the grounds that if you are going to kill, you might as well kill cleanly. As fact, apart from feeling, the fact remains that man has better things to do than kill. Since every man must die in his time, the time till then is best spent in dealing with the improvement of life—through education, husbandry, medicine, social service, and that equitable economic distribution which upsets the old cry that war is needed every twenty years to keep down the population.

The saddest thing about life to-day is that the suggestion that it might be used constructively and beneficially is a counsel of perfection. There comes the time when every man, in order to continue with his construction, may have to defend himself. But what should we think

of that man who, having picked up a gun that did not fire on the first occasion, used the same weapon a second time, only to find it useless again? Force among nations is that out-of-date weapon. Its inefficiency has been proved time and again. The nations continue to use it. They try force, though they know that it fails; they do not with equal ardour try the opposite of force.

My own conscience does not permit me to embrace pacificism. Whilst for our ability to speak the word, we depend on the lives of those who bring us our food, I feel that those lives have to be helped. The pacifist says, such men have no conscience. I reply, culturally and socially, they have not had time to develop it; it is not their fault, it is ours. Agreed, says the pacifist, but now is the time to correct it; even by refusing, as did one film star, to entertain troops because that would encourage them. Such whole-hearted following of conscience is admirable. My own falls short, through arrested development. Pacifism takes the long view, whilst remaining short-sighted, and there are moments when the length of view must be limited, to remain within focus. I believe that it is a hopeful sign about this war that people are bored. They wonder why they need be, and know even whilst performing whatever is their duty that they will not cease to be bored yet.

They begin to admit, in fact, that war is a bore—and that surely is some advance.

During the year they must advance further. They must see war as a cause for shame. They must beware lest boredom become acceptance. Lest feelings become so numbed that one accepts the fact that people should talk of using aeroplanes for a grandstand view of men killing each other, had the Graf Spee chosen to fight,

as we already accept news-reels of the bombing of Helsinki being slipped in, as a turn in an evening's entertainment between Donald Duck and the main picture. We must retain our ability to be shocked. Then, and then only shall we cease to be haunted, every minute of every day, by the voice of Freedom asking her defenders, "Am I to live or to die, that you surround me with arms." We have much to do, much to guard against doing and becoming, in 1940. . . .

Meanwhile, I thank our readers for their support during the past year and their many letters of appreciation during the last three months. I thank also our writers, and the many who have, in various ways, assisted the maintenance of the paper. None will take it amiss, I trust, if I make use of this opportunity to remind them that their continued loyalty will be needed more than ever in the months ahead, and of expressing the hope that so will this review.

NEWS REEL

THE LITERARY MACHINE

ELSEWHERE IN THIS number, Herbert Jones, writing on the history of ink, refers to an old advertisement for that fluid. As it did not come within the scope of his article, he did not mention another, which faced it. "You Cannot Afford to do your Writing in the Old Way." So said Remington, announcing "a marked increase in the sale" of their typewriter "to the titled classes and the leaders in every department of thought and action". A few pages before this went an advertisement for a "literary machine", but it had nothing to do with writing, being merely a book-rest. The name is elaborate but so is the machine; that may be because it was made by a firm which really specialized in "iron bath chairs and carriages for hot climates", but it is also because the Victorians liked elaboration both in design and description.

Old advertisements give a vivid picture of social habits. I am always surprised that not more attention is paid to them by those cogs in the literary machine of our day, the anthologist and the social historian. Scholars draw upon old diaries, playbills, memoirs; they plough through the columns of faded newspapers; but the advertisements which run beside the text they ignore.

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COMPLIMENTARY

For some time there has been a marked increase in the tendency among publishers to mark the copies sent out for review with such words as "For Review Only".

The purpose of this defacing is to prevent reviewers and unscrupulous booksellers from doing too good a trade in new copies. A firm which also prepares Christmas cards this year adopted the same practice, and what was the purpose of that it is hard to see. The cards, reproductions from wood-engravings, are cheap, being 6*d.* and 4*d.* each; it is unlikely that a reviewer would raise much by selling them, and if he should send them to his friends, that might even be regarded as helpful advertisement. To prevent him doing anything seems hardly in accord with the spirit of goodwill which they set out to express, and he certainly could not review them for this paper, as they did not arrive till 28th November, some days after the December number had, as might be expected, gone to press.

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SCRIPTURE SHORTHAND

Printed matter in many tongues, and from many lands, reaches this office. Not all of it is at first sight primarily concerned with literature—there is, for instance, *The Jacobite*, described as—and though I speak open to correction, I should say, by no means boastingly—“the only paper of its kind in New Zealand”; and to the News-sheet of the Scottish National Zoological Park I am indebted for the sad knowledge that it has lost one of its oldest inhabitants by the death of the King Penguin, Ann (previously called Andrew), at the age of twenty-seven-and-a-half years.

Before me at the moment lies a card headed “Scripture Shorthand”. It has nothing to do with the problems of the Pyramids, nor does it interpret the parables. It is simply a puzzle from an envelope called “My Own

Sunday Packet". Others included in this sixpenny-worth are an acrostic about King David, and "Bible Bees", which differ from the lay variety because they are made up of texts in which the verb can be replaced by a picture of the apiary insect. There are jumbled letters and "looking-glass writing", but no cross-word. My packet is, however, the second series; cross-words may be contained in the first. Determined as I am to obtain it, it occurs to me that for all I know, I may be treading on ground sacred to collectors. For if some collect time-tables, cricket-scores, old cookery books, directories, and ancient shop-catalogues, there must be many who specialize in missionary literature. Already, without taking more pains than the next man, I find I have acquired over a space of years, the morning service in Hula, a Bible the size of a cigarette card, a wine list from an English monastery, a Christmas card from an Alaskan mission-post . . . and of course *The War Cry*. But that is an item which the activities of Salvation Army lassies in pubs on a Friday night have made more "curious" than "rare".

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READY RECKONING

At the beginning of the war, official quarters were rightly criticized for a certain vagueness in their communications to the public. It is pleasant to see that this is now being rectified. It is only in small things, but then it is with small things that a beginning should be made, is it not? and when the King and Queen visited the London Hippodrome, we were allowed to know that the cheering lasted for "a little over two and a half minutes". Well over half a minute would give us

forty-five seconds (fifty would presumably have been "nearly three minutes"). A *little* over half a minute may therefore be taken as between thirty and forty-five seconds, and it seems to me that such measuring of seconds on such an occasion is only another instance of that preciseness, that scientific accuracy, let alone attention to small details, without which we should not, as a nation, be where we are.

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THE VOICE OF POETRY

Comment was made in the last News Reel on the flippancy of current gramophone record lists. Barely had that statement gone to the printers than there arrived for review a set of half-a-dozen records made by John Gielgud. It may be remembered that, in June, Peter Fergusson, reviewing a previous set by Edith Evans, expressed the hope that a second volume in the series would follow. This is it (*The Voice of Poetry*, Columbia, DB 1886-1891). The same formula has been followed; the poems chosen range from Shakespeare to Davies, and are lyrical, dramatic, and narrative in style. Mr. Gielgud belongs to an old-fashioned school of speaking, the mannered theatrical, remarkably aware of the external music of words, but not so sensitive to the rhythm of a stanza. Among his tricks is running words together. In Byron's poem, it is rather "by the lightofthe mo-on" that he will not rove. Nevertheless, how pleasant it is to have that poem, even if one disagrees with the rendering.

The poems in this second volume seem rather better chosen than in the first. There are Waller (*Go Lovely Rose*), Donne, Shelley, Christina Rossetti,

Morriss's *Summer Dawn*, and the two Shakespeare sonnets, *Shall I compare thee* and *That time of year*. The improvement is most marked in the modern poets, who are now represented by Bridges, Sassoon, de la Mare, only one Masfield, and T. S. Eliot. A further advance to be noted is that the records now play right through, so that one can sit down to listen without having constantly to get up to move the needle. Mr. Gielgud may not be the person to whom I most want to listen in the world, but there are many whose enthusiasm for him is unbounded, and so these excellent recordings should be deservedly popular.

* * *

A CRIMEAN MEMORY

No small part of the success which attended Florence Nightingale's efforts in the Crimea was due to the personal co-operation of the famous chef, Soyer, who made palatable the food supplied for her wounded. Then, as now, much of the food in the Army was wasted through poor cooking. Soyer showed what could be done when intelligence was added to the ingredients and, to the surprise of everyone, turned meals into menus. Helen Morris, in her book, *Portrait of a Chef*, gives a lively picture of his last party in the Crimea. It was one of those occasions which threaten to go wrong; two cooks fell ill, ice ran short, and "the required knives and forks had not come back from a previous borrower". Soyer had had fresh turf specially laid outside his hut, but the sun had burned it dry and yellow and though the countryside had been scoured for greenery, "it seemed impossible to get the planned effect of lamplight on green grass." He was equal to this, as to many

another emergency; he obtained paint, and had the turf painted green. The result was so realistic that horses broke tether to reach it. In these days when we are only just beginning to make our domestic defence works look less depressing, the story is not without point.

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FLOWER OF MANHOOD

Well within the life of an elderly person's grandfather, in other words in the latter half of the eighteenth century, appeared a pamphlet called "Great Britain's Nosegay". This was a list of "all the most eminent persons of the time, with an appropriate motto in Latin or English attached to each name". The compiler, a certain Charles Jones, wasn't sure if he really *had* listed all, because he was sixty-four. But considering "the paralytic stroke I received three year since" he did pretty well, as I hope these excerpts will show. "Duke of Montagu—As you find us, favour us." "Lady Downing—A lovely, and most desirable Object." The Countess of Albemarle, it is good to know, was "One of the happiest Mothers in the World", whilst "Sir William Beauchamp Proctor, Bart., K.B., and George Cooke, Esq." were "Happily United". Lord Grosvenor was "one of the best of Brothers" and Lord Tyrawley "in Camps and Courts well known". "Than whom more friendly few" was Edwyn Stanhope, Esq., LL.D. Sir Mat. Featherstonhaugh, Bart., F.R.S., "distinguishes properly" but another of the same distinction, Edward Delaval, Esq., F.R.S., was merely "an Adept". Not all the mottoes were as complimentary as that. Lord Villiers, for instance, was saddled with "Ladies, beware!" and

Lord Edgcumbe rather tersely greeted, on the opposite page, with "Steady, Boys, Steady". There are echoes of naval occasions in the announcement that Sir George Bridges Rodney, "Will pepper their flat-bottom boats," and politics enter in with the plaint for the Earl of Bute, "Ubi Lapsus? Quid Feci?" But the most poignant to-day, and the real cause of this paragraph, is the entry under the Earl of Halifax of that time—"What Country in the World is ignorant of the Pains I have taken?" One may laugh at both the pomposity of the author and the servility of his dedication to the "very worthy members of both the clubs at Whites". But he started what may be called the first *New Statesman* competition, and it would be interesting to see what would be turned to-day for, say, Winston Churchill, Harry Pollitt, Lady Beresford Whyte, Mme. Tabouis and Godfrey Winn, Lord Gort, Lord Ponsonby, the Duchess of Kent, and Mr. Dingle Foote.

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A POCKET-BOOK

The human mind is an unreliable agent. If one finds in a book that which one likes, one is the more disposed to like the rest. There may be much in *The Knapsack* which I dislike, and I discount it, simply because of the chance that I came upon George Herbert's *The Collar* before I had found it. In like manner, I came upon Lorca—and that is the kind of anthology which this book is. Because "it is impracticable to carry about with one an adequate library" and because "it is a workable philosophy that each man has to construct for himself if he is to preserve a serene mind", Herbert

Read has designed "a pocket book of prose and verse" for those on active service. He has based his compilation on certain convictions. One is that "the real good is not done by calculation nor defined by reason; it is an act of courage or of grace" (therefore there has been given "a certain prominence to great deeds and noble characters"). Another is that "it is the virtue of humility that finally triumphs" and "this same virtue is the secret of all human happiness". Mr. Read, as purchasers of his other recent anthology, *The English Vision*, will know, is not hostile to the spirit which cries "England, my England!" but it is by the index rather than by the preface that an anthology is judged and *The Knapsack* contains passages from Chapman's translation of Homer, Froissart, Walton's *Life of Doctor Donne*, Crashaw, Yeats, David Jones's *In Parenthesis*, the *Journals* of Gilbert White, the *Letters* of Sacco and Vanizetti, Lin Yutang. It includes Edward Lear and other light verse, but states that the prose extracts are longer than those usually given in such books. *The Knapsack* contains over 600 pages, is only three-quarters of an inch thick, and is bound with a fold-over cover, which prevents loose objects, among which it may be packed, from crumpling the pages. The publishers are George Routledge and Sons, the price is six shillings.

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A CORRECTION

Percy Smith writes to say that I was mistaken in giving him the credit for the short nature-film, *The Stickleback*, reviewed in the September issue. The film was really photographed by J. V. Durden, who has

also made a colour-film dealing with the Burnet Moth. Percy Smith's own contribution to the series is *The Lupin* and *The Newt*.

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FEBRUARY FILLED-UP

Since announcing contents for February in the Christmas number, further contributions have come to hand, and next month's issue will accordingly contain a study of William Carlos Williams by Horace Gregory, a short history of the Indian cinema by Khwaja Ahmad Abbas, an article on Joseph Conrad's political prophecies, and further poetry by W. H. Auden.

HEINÄSAAREI

(A Finnish Island)

By ROBERT HERRING

SUOMI, TO GIVE Finland its Finnish name, is to me largely the memory of a bird-island. Life, or those in it, may now make that seem unimportant, but I assure you the memory lasts.

And it will, more than the present foolishness of political fumlbers. Man is a fool in most things, most of all in his governing, but sometimes his foolishness takes the form of bravery, sometimes of pleasure.

I write of the latter, as a record to what may, by the time this is printed, *have* been Finland ¹. Once I climbed a mountain, in Merionethshire, to add a stone to the cairn commemorating men of that county. I had enjoyed the climb, known the grass, loved the view; shared, at least, that much of the lives I gave thanks to. That stone was laid, I think, in a spirit slightly different from that in which, though with the best will in my eyes, I bought poppies in later years. Enjoyment is much. And to be preserved, even if only as a thing we did once have, though we did not know how to use it.

II

It was the best aerodrome I had seen. Unfinished, because the one they had had, no longer sufficed. You know that feeling of life on the wing. We had flown to Helsinki, because Tallinn spell-bound us.

¹ *This article was held over from the December number through lack of space.*—R. H.

The bus from the air-port went faster than the Polish plane which had brought us. But Helsinki could wait. We had rushed through towns—Stockholm, Riga, Tallinn; the last had taught its lesson, you can't rush through that, and now it wasn't Helsinki for the once-over, but Finland to get into. Lapp Finland at that.

May I say that that is easy? Others have been there before me, and it sounds very adventurous, which is one way of enjoying one's self. But I never see any point in enduring hardship, if you can get there just as well, in all senses, in comfort. I have hiked in Hautes Pyrénées, gone steerage to Iceland; travelled in Yugo-Slavian trains, and on the Southern Railway; flown by Imperial Airways, and I have come to it, one is a fool not to travel comfortably if one can. That, after all, is the aim of polar expeditions and who am I to gainsay them, other authors notwithstanding? So, in Helsinki, after one of the best dinners of my life, in an open-air restaurant on the boulevard, the air full of music, gull-wings, and scent from many flowers, next morning to official quarters. "We have so many days. We wish to go as far North as possible. Not to the West, to the East. Can that be arranged?"

Yes, it could be. While they drew up plans, we went round the islands. Helsinki grew on me. Going there, on water, between islands of trees, knowing soon I should be going North, I found where I wanted to be.

It takes time to find what one has searched for. One finds a piece, say lakes in, say, the Pyrénées, or the nights of the long slow sunsets in Wales. One has perhaps had a Mediterranean moment. But these first times, one overshoots the mark. It seems to me that one's compass point swings wildly before coming to

rest. Or, put it another way, one goes after what one almost doesn't want, is attracted by that, because one has to lay it, like a ghost, or like skittles. When it is laid, what is left standing is what one wants. Like a fir, or what firs often become, a flagpole. Like the one on the island to which we steered.

Myriad yachts bearing down on us made us land. The house among the trees was a clubhouse, full of young women, watching their friends a-sail. They were in gay jersies, small red caps, ski-trousers, wind-jammer coats, with green and red handkerchiefs. Their boys landed, a torrent of sailcloth trousers, plus fours, tartan shirts, Lapp knives on hip—fancy dress, beach-clothes. But *not* Cannes-costume. They were not experimenting with *Esquire*. They were young yachting people, wearing what they'd got, odds and ends. Having apparent good taste, they wore it rather well.

"God bless them," I said then, in July, "and let nothing across the sea, beyond their islands, let nothing happen to deny them". I do not necessarily mind youth being hurt, that is called growing up. But I hate youth to be deflected, denied, distorted, or deadened. The young Finns enjoyed themselves, and not, as English youth is apt to, with half an eye on the impression it's making, even on itself. These had sailed and were hungry. They went for their food, gaily but quietly, though chattering. No pushing or snatching. Each fetched his or her own, and if a girl sat at a table it was not as languid lady, but to keep it, and she used the waiting time to get her change ready, for she paid her share (O un-English girl, not to be powdering!).

But when they grow up, it will be worse than for us, for once married, comradeship ceases.

We returned to our boat, and to the capital. That is its skyline—that and that, and that bit coming in now to join the rest. One point falls behind another or slides across, to form a new skyline, as our boat turns through the channels. An unfinished dock-warehouse, a Baltic Battersea power-station, joins in, with a block of flats, with a store behind, with a row of blocks, a spire giving point to all. It is like building with bricks ; as it should be, a building is bricks, and, among others, each building should itself be one brick, adding to the whole building of—well, here, Helsinki.

All was well, on return. Phone calls had been put through to the Arctic Circle. That night we left, by sleeper. And next morning, reached Rovaniemi. That is how one arrives at the capital of Lapland, whatever those who make more by going otherwise may tell you.

It is a trading town, but it is also the railway terminus and, the Finnish Government having opened an Arctic Highway, through Lapland, up to the North, it is also the terminus of that. On the route there are hosteleries, here at Rovaniemi something more—a huge hotel, built in the concrete architecture which calls for bedrooms like private wards and floors which smell, owing to their rubber floor-covering, like anæsthetic. There are also a soaring, large lounge, an umbrellaed terrace over a river lurching with logs—the final touch to anyone North-touched—and a dining-room, in which, owing to the compromise between Finnish and Swedish meal-times, food is never finished serving.

Students, anxious to leave towns in the summer, come up to wait. To save language troubles, flags are put on each table so that you know at once who speaks

which. Governmental liquor-control means that whisky is cheaper than at home and vodka so cheap, it is not to be thought of; just drunk.

Thus it is that you go to a Lapp circus on the outskirts, win chocolates at darts, imply that is a somewhat sissy prize, have it explained by a officer that such are luxuries, which vodka isn't, to Lapps. To Finns, also? you inquire, and, having changed choics for vod, drink till you always wonder, weeks after, how you caught that bus at seven next morning.

Though it is very helpful that the hotel puts its lights on, instead of off, to show when they close; they have to, the night-sunlight makes other methods impracticable.

Next day brings its anti-climax of passing the Arctic Circle, not entirely redeemed by a labourer, stripped to the waist, resting in the heat. In the bus were four Finnish labourers, a young Lapp woman, the usual Americans, and the usual English spinster, "I was born at Byfleet, but no one has ever heard of it, so I always say London, thank God Cook's got me a corner seat."

She had reason to, for one of the Americans, a spoilt girl, using her gastric juices unwisely to provide unwanted conversation, suffered from digestive rebellion. In that she was not alone. Shortly after the first reindeer was past, two husky youths mounted, saw their cycles stowed away, and settled down. But not for long. The huskiest was soon sick. Whilst Byfleet was bewailing that no one but herself could speak Swedish ("I learn a language every year, and this year it's Swedish"), a Lapp passed the young Finn an envelope he had removed from his woollen tunic. It was typical of all that the envelopes really provided for road-sickness have been sat on by the Englishwoman (who could

speak Swedish) whilst the natives who, one being Finn and one Lapp, couldn't speak to each other, shared at least the common sympathy of unaccustomed bus-travel.

The night brought us to Inari, where the hotel being crowded, I slept in a hut in the woods. But also for the first time saw a Midnight Sun which was not just sunlight at midnight, but streaming, raving gold radiance from a sun high in the sky, blessing the harebells, cotton-grass, ranunculus, clover, and many tall plants which we might know but did not now recognize because the intensity of their short lives up here makes them taller, as if to atone. I found that the midnight sun is not perpetual dawn, but high noon at night. The flowers aren't shamefaced, they are Dionysianly drenched. Mist rose from the river, making ridiculous effects of a Russian "white night", and a boatman offered to ferry me over, or so I thought. But more probably, he was telling me the way, for when I shook my head and went the other, I got lost.

Byfleet was quieter next morning. "It wouldn't take much to send me back. My room faced the road, I didn't sleep a wink, and the mosquitoes ! Now we're to be packed like sardines for twelve hours !" All the same, talk of turning back was just one of those statements the English make, to show they are free to.

A monk got in. A striped barrier, like a large comb across the road, showed we were in the Petsamo district. Beyond that, things are duty-free. Life is hard up here, so goods come in free. Singing started behind me. I thought it was the monk. But when I was tapped on the back and offered sweets, I realized it was a Finnish workman. Passports looked at, we continue, until we stop, once for a reindeer, frequently for the boy to

jump down, take letters in a box by the road or throw papers down. Next, we come to—what? a saw-mill? The map said “gold-washing”, but that shouldn’t be here. It might be a bridge they are building, or a dam. It doesn’t matter. It’s a lumber-looking town. Byfleet says, “Ten thousand men work here.” As none of them spoke Swedish, even she didn’t know at what. The fact remains that ten thousand men need and have clusters of huts, first-aid cabins, canteens, saloons; they clump around in long boots and check lumber shirts, and all have at their waists bottles of oil against the mosquitoes. They grew worse.

They grew worst of all at a place we didn’t stop at. It was full, so we went off the route to Yläluostari, nearer the Russian frontier and near an Orthodox monastery. We set out for it, followed by countless wings. The monks, tall, bearded, and fanning themselves, are gradually dwindling in number. They sold skins, knives, and curios like any other tourist centre. But they had their own clouds of mosquitoes, and we made rain an excuse to run. At the inn, there was a young Dutchman, with two sisters, who had been at Inari. He dressed in English and spoke almost every other language. Byfleet could have used her Swedish, but she was on at Liinahamari, to reach which we left at seven next day.

There was breakfast at the inn, and these Government-run inns are all that can be desired—neat, speckless, simple, and friendly. At nine, on board the steamer which was to take us to the Russian frontier. Nine hours on the Arctic Ocean, and then Vaitolahti, a village half in Finland, half in Soviet Russia. Sky, sea, and rocks were grey. The sea whitened with waves, the sky with wings round our small steamer, with nowhere to sit

but the dining-saloon, meant for twenty. We had fifty aboard. What they didn't tell us was that we were going to be deposited on an island for two hours, in rain.

In the middle of the island, a hut. In one room, in a corner, two sea-gulls, a fox, and a seal, all stuffed. In the next room, swinging her legs, a small girl on a bed in the corner. It was easy for the birds and beasts to stay there. But the little girl wasn't stuffed—what can she have thought of us, scuttling off a ship, streaming into her home, peering round, leaving without a word? We couldn't give her a word, of course. But we could have given her a sweet, a post-card, something other than the shame-faced smile our conscience made us lay at the feet of her gravity. At least, she didn't think us frightening; indeed, in our assortment, she may have found, or will find us, amusing. That will be why her father, back there at the beach, waved us on. And now, following the painted posts which led to his house, and go beyond, there was bog. Peat-bog. And the plants grew in luxuriousness—ferns which at home we nourish in greenhouses, flowers which we coax into bloom, battered here by Arctic wind, rain, and bird-droppings.

But they grew in clumps. Between the clumps was bog. Legs sank in, shoes and trousers were soaked.

We decided the beach would be simpler. We struck off to the left, which was drier. It was also more difficult. Clumps continued, but what was once bog was now birds' nests. Their burrowing is like rabbits. The ground was riddled by them. Walking, difficult, became dangerous. We gave up attempting to gain a foothold, and sought only to avoid breaking an ankle.

The beach, finally gained, was of long sloping rocks, made slippery by the rain, which liquefied the plentiful

droppings, for the island Byfleet had discovered was Heinäsaari a bird sanctuary and we ought to be very glad we had stopped there. We would be, were we not so wet and so cold. Moreover, though we were in the home of birds, in their holy of holies, we got to know them no better. They flew up at our approach, settled on the sea, whence they cawed whenever we fell. That was frequent and as each slab of rock ended in a seaweedy-pool, it was also damping. Murmuring Christina Rossetti we trudged on, for the ship's siren was sounding and the ship meant warmth and a chance to dry clothes. But the launch, when we reached it, broke down and we drifted. One of us, a Red Army officer, returning to station, called out to us, translated by a Finnish lady, "You are cold?" "Yes," we said, and to emphasize, fished for and put on some red woollen gloves. This was signal for further mirth; I explained they were tourist emblems, but the officer still laughed. We are glad he did not know our opinion of his own grey cotton gloves, for it was nice to make contacts, even in mid-Arctic Ocean, and talking to him, we were one up on Byfleet, who was regulating her Swedish. The launch chugged, performed, and we reached the slip; the stewardess wound socks and stockings round the galley stove, smiling, and the Dutchman's sisters suggested sharing a cabin to dry.

We reached Vaitolahti, to wonder why it was our destination. Cold, dank and desolate. Children by the rusty jetty had strung shells on cotton, having nothing else save that and dried starfish to sell; but they did not seem to understand money. Vaitolahti is not, like North Cape, the end of the world. It is the beginning of another, unknown. We were warned not to leave the

path, because there were stories of what happened to tourists who inadvertently crossed the frontier last week. We might look at it, that was all. It was Rodinesque. A small grey kitten sat mewling in the rain. It was Persian, but it shouldn't be, up here; there was no reason for anyone living here; a ragtail alley-cat would have modulated its yowls in depression; to be fluffily Persian was flamboyant.

"Look at this mist!" said Byfleet, already settled in the Government inn which is the northernmost hotel in the world. "I came here, just to bathe, and now I shan't be able."

"It would be rather cold," I suggested.

"Don't care about that. But I shouldn't see where I'm going. Might be carried to the Russian side and sent off to Moscow. Too bad."

She seemed resigned, however; she had had her ambition, to swim in the Arctic Ocean; to fulfil it she had travelled, speaking Swedish, through Finland and Lapland, dressed in gym shoes, a tartan skirt, and a beret. "What will you do now?" we asked.

"Stay here till a Norwegian boat comes, and catch up with my correspondence."

It seemed her Swedish had been in vain. We dared not hope she had learnt Norwegian in an earlier year. So we left her, drinking tea, writing post-cards, doing the same as she would have done at Worthing, and taking no more notice of her surroundings. A grey sentry passed us on a grey bicycle. The mist cleared to show us, across a river, the board marked in three languages, and once again the ship's siren blew. Down muddy ruts, between dripping barbed wire and two lowing calves, we returned.

The ship stopped to take on fish or to send supplies for lonely lighthouse keepers. At seven in the evening a Lapp who had been sick ever since she boarded at nine that morning was landed at a fishing station. We reached Liinahamari at nine, ate, slept, and left at eight next morning.

It is the end of the Arctic Highway, and Finland's ice-free northern port. The papers now call it Petsamo, but that is the name of the district, Liinahamari it is—or was, for as we knew it, it will probably not remain; a kindly place, sheltered in hills, with creeks opening out, and a white inn offering welcome hospitality—that will go. As so much seems to go.

We were fifteen hours in that bus next day. But I had learnt Yoga. Five hours went, five hours of firs. But no longer did they stab my eyes. They floated by, a soft scarf wrapping my eyes. Now and again, I picked out some pattern they made, followed it till it became part of the dream. Now and again, I pondered problems such as the whiteness of the flowers. There were mauve ones, and pinks and buttercups, and the red hearts of daisies—but each daisy has only one heart, to many white petals, and there was drift upon drift of white cotton-plant. The Lapps have snow so many months of the year, and then they have these snow-coloured flowers; is that why their dress is so bright, blue wool, trimmed with red and yellow bands, serrated, too, like the sun's rays? . . . And so to Rovaniemi again, this time like old stagers—and a film was showing Clara Kimball Young in *The Hills of Old Wyoming*.

Next day, we took train to Kemi, and flew thence to Helsinki, the first time there has been an air service. The pilot jammed his fingers in a taxi-door, and we

flew low through horizontal rain and were two hours late. We called on those who had made possible the trip, thanked them, inquired about the islands as summer sites. "Ah, were you Swedish or Finn, we would give one to you. Foreign, you must hire." And would.

We flew over them later, island after island, strewn like logs in the sea. And in the meantime, I had learnt to love Helsinki, and the way the Finns have—what is rare in the North—surplus of certitude to be gay and gracious. But it is that bird-island I remember, with that girl sitting there, her father who did not mind us streaming in, and, now I can confess it, the seal I envied her having for plaything.

JENNY HANIVER AND THE BASILISKS

By WILLY LEY

IT HAS BEEN a favourite pastime for a number of authors to try to identify the strange monsters so frequently encountered in old Natural History books. While we know positively that such "natural marvels" as Sirens, Dragons, Unicorns, Giants, and Basilisks do not exist we also like to know why people once believed in their existence. It is not due to lack of knowledge or ability on the part of interpreters of the legends that the efforts to trace the origin of the belief in these monsters to definite errors or misunderstandings were not always successful. Nor is it due to lack of records and/or fanciful descriptions. It is due simply to the fact that legends of any kind can get started in dozens of different ways, all inconspicuous and untraceable. Afterwards they just grow, subjected to chances and hazards like a vessel with broken rudder and disabled engines on the high seas and as unpredictable as the movements of a drunken sailor on land.

In this connection it is amusing to remember that once scientists tried to destroy such a legend from the outset. When in 1798 and 1800 the first skins of the Australian "platypus" reached England, a good many zoologists refused to believe in an animal with a duck-like bill attached to the head of a mammalian body. As Knox expressed it writing in 1824 in the *Memoirs of the Wernerian Society*: "The platypus skins reached England by vessels which had navigated the Indian seas, a circumstance in itself sufficient to rouse the suspicions of the scientific naturalist, aware of the monstrous

impostures which the artful Chinese had so frequently practised on European adventurers; in short the scientific felt inclined to class this rare production of nature with eastern mermaids and other works of art." Nowadays it is well known to everybody that the Australian platypus is not a "work of art", comparable to an eastern mermaid which, it might be explained, consists of the fore part of a monkey sewn to the hind part of a large fish of some kind. But the European scientists, although erring for a short while in this particular instance, had sufficient reasons to be suspicious. They were not only harassed by "Mermaids" coming from the Far East, they also had to battle against the bones of dragons from China and the bones of giants from all over Europe, one as well as the other being simply fossil bones of large extinct mammals of the Tertiary Period. And then there existed a European equivalent to the Eastern Mermaid, the "Jenny Haniver", which infested, in recognized and in unrecognized specimens, every embryonic museum and "curiosity cabinet" in existence.

Unrecognized Jenny Hanivers were usually labelled "Basilisk", constituting fake proof for the actual existence of one of the favourite and also one of the most horrid monsters of ancient and medieval lore. A "Jenny Haniver", not to leave my readers in the dark about the meaning of this name, is an imitation monster, fashioned from certain fish, usually skates or rays, and made to resemble whatever absurdity its manufacturer (to be translated literally: "He who made it by hand") believed to be most unusual . . . and most salable. How the name of "Jenny Haniver" for such fake monsters originated and what it really means nobody

knows. Dr. E. W. Gudger of the American Museum of Natural History in New York, and Dr. Gilbert P. Whitley of the Australian Museum in Sydney have tried their very best to trace the origin of this term and have failed. The only suggestion made so far is that the second word may be a distorted form of "Anvers", the French name for Antwerp where many Jenny Hanivers were probably made.

Be that as it may, there is no doubt that these Jenny Hanivers greatly influenced the popular conception of the appearance of one of those classic mythical monsters of unknown origin, the Basilisk.

Late during the Middle Ages an unknown author compiled a volume of animal legends which in 1480 was printed for the first time by Pieter van Leu in the Netherlands under the title *Dialogus creaturarum*. The eighth of these dialogues is the one between the Basilisk and a fish and begins as follows: "There is a kind of lizard that is called Basilisk in Greek and Regulus in Latin and Isidorus says that it is the king of all the snakes and serpents. Even serpents flee the Basilisk because its breath is deadly and so is its appearance." Isidorus, who is mentioned in this quotation, is doubtlessly Isidor of Seville, but the unknown author of the *Dialogus creaturarum* did not have to rely on him for his information, there was nobody during those times who dared to doubt the existence of the Basilisk, king of the serpents or even of everything alive with the exception of man. The belief in the Basilisk was old even then, it had remained unchanged since classical times.

But while the belief had persisted the supposed appearance of the monster had undergone considerable changes. The Roman, Pliny the Elder, had described

the Basilisk simply as a snake, distinguished from others merely by the possession of a small golden crown. The author of the *Dialogus creaturarum* termed it a "kind of lizard" but already there existed a third version that was to become more and more predominant. A Basilisk, it was said, needed a number of rare events and coincidences to come into existence. The origin of the Basilisk was an egg, laid during the days of the dog star (Sirius) by a seven-year-old rooster. Such an egg could be easily recognized, because it did not have the normal ovoid shape but was spherical. Also it had no shell but only a tough skin or membrane. This egg had then to be hatched by a toad . . . it was a matter of dispute whether the rooster might also be able to hatch the Basilisk. Naturally such an animal combined the features of its various foster parents, while essentially a serpent it had the habits of a toad and some of the physical characteristics of a rooster.

This story was credited by everybody until about A.D. 1500 when the breakdown of several old superstitions inspired a healthy scepticism in every branch of learning. Konrad Gesner von Zürich in Switzerland, in 1565 called it "women's gossip and misleading nonsense" and soon afterwards Basilisks disappeared from the list of known animals. That the story lasted that long at all is due only to the famous Basilisk of Vienna which was "killed" in 1202. Its story is told in brief in an inscription that once graced an old house in Vienna. The house itself does not exist anymore and the inscription itself is lost, but its text is still known. Translated it reads :—

Anno Domini MCCII.

Kaiser Friedrich II was elected. During his rule a Basilisk

originated from (the egg of) a rooster. It looked like the figure shown above and the well in which it was found was filled with soil, doubtlessly because many people died from the venom of the animal.—*Renovated in 1677 by the landlord Hanns Spannring, bookseller.*

The legend connected with that event in old Vienna tells that once a Master Baker lived in that house who was generally disliked for his unpleasant character and habits. Not even his helpers and apprentices stayed with the exception of one young man who was desperately in love with the master's daughter. But when he finally dared to ask the father's permission to marry her, he was thrown out of the house and told that he might have a chance if the rooster laid an egg. Soon after the old woman who did the household tasks returned from a freshly dug well, complaining that the water was foul and stinking and that she had almost fainted with fright. The burghers, running together, soon decided that there must be a Basilisk in the well and a learned magister explained that there was no other way of harming the monster than to descend into the well with a mirror. The Basilisk, he explained, in seeing its own image would die with fright as any other animal would. But there was nobody willing to descend into the well except the young hero. Needless to say everything ended well and the Master Baker had to give his permission for the marriage of his only daughter to the former apprentice.

While this story shows all the earmarks of later "romantisisation" the repeated mention of the well is somewhat suspicious. And when the famous geologist Eduard Suess examined the "picture" of the Basilisk from the old house—it had been saved—he soon saw

that the "figure" was the original Basilisk and that there was a definite reason for mentioning a well in the legend. The ground of Vienna consists mainly of clay with layers of sandstone that usually cover the ground water so that a well has to penetrate the sandstone layers in order to reach the water. The sandstone layers, however, are not solid rock but consist of roundish pebbles that oftentimes cling together in strange and curious shapes. The water, on the other hand, is not as pure and clean as the inhabitants wished it to be, occasionally it is saturated with hydrogen-sulphur compounds that impart a bad taste and a very bad smell, reminiscent of rotten eggs.

From these geological facts Suess was able to reconstruct the probable story of what happened. A new well had been drilled which apparently showed a higher concentration of sulphur hydrogen compounds than even the hardened Viennese were able to stand. After the gases had dissipated somewhat people climbed down into the well to find out, if possible, what had caused the "poisoning" and discovered a curiously shaped lump of sandstone that was then declared to be a dead Basilisk.

This particular stone Basilisk resembled a rooster—but since there was no definite shape assigned to the "most venomous monster" almost anything that looked venomous and evil could be offered as a specimen.

It is at this point that the history of the Basilisk and the history of the Jenny Haniver begin to coincide. Of course, there is no way of telling when and where dead skates and rays were transformed into Jenny Hanivers for the first time. It must have been fairly early, however, because Konrad Gesner, who dealt

such heavy blows to the belief in Basilisks, already knew of the existence of these fake monsters. In his book on fishes and other marine animals, printed for the first time in Latin in 1558 as fourth volume of his great *Historia Animalium*, he even printed a woodcut of a Jenny Haniver, which is the oldest picture known. In the accompanying text Gesner told that he saw such an imitation monster in Zürich in the travelling shop of a vendor of quack medicines who claimed that it was a Basilisk, while there was no doubt that it had been fashioned from a ray. He specifically stated that his reason for illustrating the deformed ray was to warn against such impositions claimed to be either Basilisks or winged serpents or even young dragons. From the wording one receives the impression that making Jenny Hanivers must have been a very common practice. Although those brought to Switzerland and those preserved in various French, German, and Belgian collections were in all probability made in Belgium and France, there must have been another centre of manufacture in Italy during the sixteenth century, because there are very many Jenny Hanivers in Milan, Venice, and Verona that are made from fish of the Mediterranean Sea.

To change a ray into a Jenny Haniver is not very difficult. Anyone who has ever seen a ray swimming in an upright position near the glass of a large sea water aquarium will recall the not quite pleasant sensation of having faced an evil living mask. Actually the staring "eyes" of the face are but the nostrils. The real eyes are on the dark back of the fish and are rather inconspicuous, especially on dead and dried specimens. It might be mentioned that a dried ray looks rather

harmless if viewed from above. To make it look weird the head has to be accentuated, which is accomplished easily enough by cutting the large pectoral fins where they are connected with the head. If they are partly severed and pulled somewhat to the sides they give the impression of being wings. There are occasionally adult rays with non-adherent pectoral fins, which are really permanent larval forms. It may well be that these nature-made Jenny Hanivers are the models for the artificial ones that must have sold so well a few centuries ago.

Once having started cutting the pectoral fins, the skilful artisan does not see any reason why he should be restricted to only two cuts in his work. Two more cuts, one on each side, that partly sever a small strip of fin material, are an excellent method to produce fore legs, whilst the appendages of the pelvic fins of the male fishes need only slight manipulation to result in hind legs. Thus the harmless flat ray has already acquired two pairs of legs and a pair of wings. But it is the "face" that really affords an opportunity for the artist to show his skill. The flat mouth is pulled outward a bit to look more curved so as to more closely resemble a human mouth. Sometimes the tissues on both sides of the mouth are pulled outwards to form cheeks or even more weird appendages that would serve no purpose at all if they actually existed. The tip of the head is then pulled so as to become more elongated; after this it is bent over to resemble a pointed hat or a Bishop's mitre.

After having accomplished all this, the artisan had only a few more things to do: to insert artificial eyes into the nostrils, to dry the whole transformation

carefully and in such a manner that the distortions did not disappear but were, if possible, emphasized, and to find a customer. How the latter could be accomplished is not quite clear since not only Gesner, but practically every author writing on fishes after Gesner described and pictured Jenny Hanivers with full knowledge of the procedure of making them. But there must have been a good many people that were willing to spend money for dead Basilisks, possibly to convince their friends that the books were wrong and that the deadly monster did exist after all.

The strangest aspect of the whole story is, however, that even nowadays Jenny Hanivers are occasionally fashioned. As late as in 1929 and in 1933 two "specimens" suddenly appeared in the United States. Both of them could be traced to their makers, simple fishermen in both cases, and it was found that they had never heard either of Basilisks or of Jenny Hanivers. It had been simply the faint resemblance of the fishes' appearance to a human face that had prompted them to try to increase the similiarity by artificial means.

Many of the old Jenny Hanivers that we discover in old books or in old collections had possibly a similar origin. But since at that time the ancient legend of the Basilisk still lingered, they had acquired a significance that would be impossible to-day. And the very fact of their existence did not only increase the lifetime of the legend but noticeably influenced the conceptions of the form of the deadly monster that never lived.

THE LIFE STORY OF THE VERB “ TO BE ”

By E. SHREWSBURY

MARVELLOUS THINGS ARE being discovered in these days, and not least in Language. The history and meaning of words and even of individual letters is being brought to light after age-long slumber in the Land of Forgotten Things. And amongst the specially striking revelations is the solution of the puzzle of the erratic verb “ to be ”. You will probably have wondered over the extraordinary fact that while it begins with “ BE ” it continues with “ ARE ” and “ IS ” for no apparent reason. Had the task of creating a main auxiliary verb for a great language been left to you, it would have exhibited a noble unity—not a conglomeration.

It all started with a sign. Gestures play a large part in the formation of language and often, though not always, precede speech in the natural order of things. In this case there arose a need of some means of indicating the cutting of a stick or twig in two—the kind of thing one does with a chopper if a piece of firewood is too long. And the makers of language did just what you doubtless would have done in their place. They adopted a most natural and unmistakable sign. The left arm was raised across and a little in front of the body, with the hand open and fingers pointing to the right—palm inward. The right hand, also opened and with the fingers pressed together, made the action of cutting down upon the left.

The sign progressed from acting to painting or drawing. It became familiar in the form of a more or less crude but efficient sketch of the two hands caught in the act of making the gesture. Pictures have given

place to writing because they take more time. It is quite a little task to sketch a hand even tolerably well, and so it came to pass quite naturally that in course of time the drawing was reduced to a sign—the cross.

So much for the sign and the meaning of it. Now for the sound attached to it, or rather the sounds, for they were several. Each described vocally what the gesture pictured—the raising of hands and arms and the cutting action. The arms are R in early language (and not less so still) and "up" is P or B or another labial. To name the sign "the lifting of the arms" makes it B-R or P-R—or, if you like, R-B and R-P, since everything is reversible in the delightful realm of early speech. Call it then BAR—the arms raised and making the gesture of cutting across.

We use this piece of early logic every time we employ the word BREAK—there is the BR, and there the idea of severing. But we have just used it again in the word SEVER, which gets both its VR (= BR), and its idea, from the same source. Try the less used verb RIVE, more easily recognizable in its participle RIVEN perhaps, thanks to a famous hymn. From that comes ROVE—to be separated as a result of wandering away—and its noun ROVER. And yet again we have made use of the same persistent root-word in the verb SEPARATE, where the PAR and the thought are alike derived (there it comes again !) from that early cross.

A word of caution. "The lifting of the arms" is BAR, and so the cross and what it stands for is BAR. But BAR is not necessarily the cross. This is not the one and only purpose for which the arms are raised. It is just one of the important signs made by them and drafted into the groundwork of language. It is easily

picked out from the other applications of the letters by the meaning. To RAP, for example, is to raise the arms and knock at a door—evidently another idea altogether, yet sharing the common root-syllable because it deals with the uplifted arms.

It can be seen which meaning is intended from the drift of the sentence or from some other word put in for the purpose. That added word may be one of the early single-consonant words and be tacked on to the word BAR itself. We have noticed an S attaching itself to the word several times—and there it comes again in “SEVERAL” ! When it is there we find that the cross is intended. That S is a complete word in itself, and a most important one. Since it leads us in the direction we would follow, we’ll trail it.

It is not quite so simple as it seems, yet there is no other consonant than S here. There is a mystery about it. And there is something reminiscent of a particular star in the mystery. Have you ever looked long and earnestly at the middle star in the handle of the Plough—the star that looks like one but is really two? The twins can be made out with a little searching. So here—this S is really double, and we are dealing with a word ESS in it. You are familiar with it—quite; though perhaps you have not recognized it yet. You will in a moment, but let us begin at the beginning of its story.

The original meaning and value of S is the human teeth—which are several, similar, and separate, though assembled. Closely following that primary meaning comes a second—the fingers, also several, similar, and separate, if joined. There are two sets of each, giving us S-S when we put either pair together. That is our word ESS—but you won’t have recognized it yet.

If you put the tips of your fingers together and press the heels of your hands against each other, but curve your fingers as far as possible, you will construct a kind of round cage. That is ESS. You have another such trap, without doing any constructing, behind the bars of your teeth. That too is ESS. So that the word takes on the idea of an enclosed hollow. There are many such, and the range of applications is wide. But one is supreme amongst them and it is that which tells of the womb. That especially is ESS.

Having got so far the rest is easy. The word takes on special reference to womankind—and now you will recognize it. We have a man as a prince, but it takes an additional word—this word ESS—to name his wife. She is the PRINCESS. Perhaps that is a trifle beyond your status—but your SISTER is not, and the first syllable of that name is not less our ESS for having altered its vowel. Those who are familiar with a little Latin will know the word well as ESSE, the verb "to be" in that tongue. But that is anticipating somewhat, and we must retrace our steps to pick up again the word to which this ESS, in the simple form of S, insists on attaching itself.

We have seen the general trend of the value of BAR—a cutting and splitting and dividing of things. Now let us sample the ways it was commonly made use of, and the various associated ideas it acquired. It came to indicate halves quite naturally—and twins. It took on the thought of the division of land into fields and the partition of plots of ground between neighbours. It had, of course, much reference to fire-making and wood-cutting. And it was useful for describing such operations as the opening of shells of fish and skins of

fruit. Here we have come to the sense of "opening" rather than of chopping, though there is the same idea of cleavage. The thought has become one of liberating something of value hidden away in a protecting cover—in any such shelter as the word ESS might suggest in fact. So we find the two words appearing together as BAR-ESS or PAR-ESS meaning to open the shell or break the cover.

From the latter of these two forms, the one with the labial in the form of P, we get our word PRESS—originally meaning to break open a shell or fruit-skin, and then reaching out to other forms of pressure. We have the same word and the same idea of breaking open the shell in PIERCE and yet again, with another change of the sibilant, in the verb "to PRIZE open".

There is another fashion of opening the shell too—from within, when the inmate pushes out, or, in the case of fruit, when it becomes fully ripe and splits the skin. This time we use the labial B, and BAR-ESS becomes BURST in English.

Of all the uses to which this double word has been put, naturally the finest and chief is its application to the most exalted type of Ess—the womb. Very early on the phrase "to open the womb" became the special meaning of BAR-ESS. So the joint word came to denote birth and life. That is to say it became the verb "to BE" and the verb "to BEAR".

In the former of these two we have the B. In the other we have both the B and the R. But where is the S? This is where the scattered parts of the verb "to be" assemble. We have BE and we have ARE—we now call for IS. BE—ARE—IS, or, all put together, BAR-ESS, to come into existence or bring into life.

Now thought passes on to the one who comes to life. We are familiar with the Scriptural phrase describing the first-born as "that which openeth the womb"—BAR-ESS, in other words. It was an easy step from this to adopting the phrase, in its shorter form of BAR, as the ordinary name for a son. And the name stands to this day. Run over the list of big London hospitals and you will come to "BART'S". Nathanael, "an Israelite indeed" and friend of Philip, was the son of one named Tolmai, and entered the apostolic band as BAR-TOLMAI or Bartholomew. Similarly Simon Peter was also known as BAR-JONAH.

It may seem very foreign to speak of a son as a BAR, in spite of the fact that we have the same root-word in some of our principal verbs. Then remember that very pleasant name for a child—BAIRN, and that other, not so pleasant—BRAT.

But children were not the only new-born ones who were called by this phrase from earliest times. The young of various animals, especially those of the farm, partook of it in whole or in part. The Babylonians named a lamb a "BIR-u" and a kid an "ARIS-u", and had the verb "to be" in the form "BAS-u" from which we have not far to go to our word "BEAST". The Romans, too, knew a ram as an "ARIES", a name that has passed through the stars into English.

So this word of utmost significance has lived on down the ages from Babylon to London. From its original form of a phrase describing the cleaving of a shell, it has split up into virile little particles. We owe the scattered fragments of our most vital verb to it, and are able, by means of it, to gather them into a reasonable whole.

YNCKE

By HERBERT JONES

H. G. WELLS makes the point in *The Fate of Homo Sapiens* that humanity can forget how to do things. He mentions the case of the Wedgwood china process which, being passed verbally from worker to worker, resulted in secrets being carried to the grave. Considerable analytical work had to be done to rediscover the method. Wells goes on to say that widespread knowledge in books offsets such things in a general way. But supposing there was a destruction and disorganization of knowledge such as a terrific extension of the war could make. How many of us know how to "manufacture" the simplest things we need?

These thoughts are prompted by an advertisement in a last century magazine for writing ink. The firm of Morrell (then established for one hundred and fifty years) advertised as "second to none" its Coral Red and Registration inks: its Rouge Noir was "specially recommended for foreign correspondence". Why? and who first used it?

The Egyptians it seems were the first; but they used ink not upon paper but upon their pottery. The Egyptians afterwards made papyrus. The basis of their ink was carbon with gum used as a binding material. This is the basis of Indian ink (which is really Chinese ink). In practice carbon becomes lampblack which is obtained from soot. The Chinese burnt vegetables to get soot. Coal gives lampblack too. The method is still the same as in ancient times: to scrape it off the walls of a "lampblack furnace". There are pretty pictures of the Chinese doing it.

Pliny in his *Natural History* deals with ink and says that it can be easily sponged out and a writer on the subject records that Martial (A.D. 120) "sends a sponge with his newly written book of poems, so that the writing could be effaced if the composition did not merit approval".

In 1857 a Royal Society of Arts lecturer says "Sacrum Encaustum, a purple ink, the composition of which was kept a profound secret, was employed for signing documents by the Roman emperors, to whose use it was exclusively reserved". Green ink was reserved for the signatures of the guardians of the Greek emperors while their wards were minors.

Little seems to be said of ink from ancient times until the near Middle Ages, when the comment concerns the change in materials. A writer states that in the British Museum a manuscript of Shakespeare's time is fading while a ninth century manuscript (the Lindisfarne Gospels) is perfectly black.

The deplored effects are due to the transition from inks with a carbon basis to iron-gall inks. Iron gives the insoluble element of the carbon it replaces. "Galls" are the excrescences formed on the branches of various species of oaks by the larvæ of certain insects (gall-wasps). Most of us know ink-galls by the name of Oak-apple. The boiled galls give a blue-black coloration when iron salts are added. An aniline blue dye-stuff in blue-black gives the initial bright blue shade to the writing. "Blue-black" comes from the fact that these inks write *blue* and turn *black*. That is, when the liquid has evaporated and the insoluble element has penetrated the paper. The extent of the blackness or permanence depends on variation in the materials used, or the extent

to which the materials are un-oxidized in manufacture, or blotting, or the age of the ink, or the surface and substance of the paper written on.

To-day we take ink for granted. But there are two fifteenth century recipes worth noting :

“ Take a quart of rain or other soft water and put to it 4 ozs. of best blue galls gross by beattin—let it stand warm for 3 days then add 3 ozs. of copperas (Ferrous Sulphate), 4 ozs. of gum, ditto roach alum let it stand 2 or 3 days longer but shake it up 2 or 3 times a day put a little Brandy into the ink. The bottlein it will hinder it from Mouldiness.”

(Ink being an organic substance (the galls) will give nutriment to growth of moulds. Some people grow them and have them in pots to decorate window sills.)

And a recipe in verse :

To make common yncke of Wyne take a quarte,
Two ounces of gomme, let that be a parte,
Five ounces of galles, of copres take three,
Long standing dooth make it bette to be ;
If wyne ye do want, rayne water is best,
And as much stuffe as above at the least :
If yncke be to thick, put vinegar in,
For water dooth make the colour more dimme.
In haste for a shift when you have a great nede,
Take woll, or wollen to stand you in stead :
Which burnt in the fire the powder bette smalle.
With vinegar, or water make yncke with all.
If yncke ye desire to keep long in store
Put bay salt therin, and it will not hoare.
If that common yncke be not to your mind
Some lampblack there to with gomme water grinde.

Sepia is the black or dark brown pigment contained in a secretion formed in a special glandular organ of different species of cephalopoda including the cuttle fish and the squid. Invisible inks are, of course, romantic.

Cobalt chloride has a pink salt which loses crystallization when heated, and forms a blue compound which absorbs water and regains its pink colour and becomes nearly invisible on white paper. It is possible to use human saliva as an invisible ink. Saliva accelerates the darkening of ink. A diluted ink brushed over the portion written in saliva will darken before the ink spread over the rest of the paper darkens.

The typewriter and carbon papers and duplicating machine have displaced the clerk with his copying ink and tedious labours of the copying press, though I do not suppose that a copy-typist's work is anything but tedious.

There have been lawsuits concerning wills which chemical analysis of the ink proved to be fraudulent. Infra-red photography now does some of the detecting necessary. Applicants for the old-age pension have been betrayed by an analysis of the ink recording their age in the family bible.

In printing inks there have been Perfumed Inks, "Sanitary Inks," Anti-septic Inks. In 1910 someone registered a patent for an ink to print on bread. There were "Chameleon Inks" for the printing of cheques to prevent fraud.

This note must end somewhere. New York Public Library publishes a catalogue of books on the making of inks containing over 2,000 titles and many more references. If there is a threat to civilization it is as well to remember the claim made for printing that it is "The Art Preservative of All Art". And to preserve the art of printing means to preserve the right to write as you please.

ULTERIOR AIMS IN GREEK POLITICAL THOUGHT

By J. O. WISDOM

IT IS NO exaggeration to say that Professor Farrington's *Science and Politics in the Ancient World*¹ should be read by all who wish to understand something of the part philosophy can play in maintaining social conditions and of the way these can shape man's quest for scientific knowledge. This book is probably the first of its kind ; it is very readable, is nearly always clear, and is full of terse comments that are very apt. It should prove of value to a wide public : to historians that are interested in development of social structure ; to philosophers that doubt the traditional account of Greek thought as dominated by Plato ; to psychologists that try to see the mind as a whole even to believing that the study of abstract truth is guided not by what is true but by ulterior personal and social demands whose fulfilment is necessary to the very existence of its students ; to classicists who are interested in the interpretation and character of Epicurus, Lucretius, and others ; and to the unclassifiable thinking man who will see in this work an extraordinary parallel in the social and political state of the world to-day.

Underlying all the main themes of the book is the general one : that philosophy in any period is the body of logical presuppositions required by the political philosophy of the time, which is the intellectual manifestation of social structure and not a quest for truth.

¹ *Science and Politics in the Ancient World*. Benjamin Farrington. Allen and Unwin, 10s. 6d.

Professor Farrington thus classes superstition, religion, philosophy, and politics together as means by which the few can impose their will on the many: they are part of *organized superstition* as a governmental technique. It is, therefore, necessary to contend that popular superstition, while in part originated by the people, is largely imposed upon them. The field in which the author chooses to illustrate this is that of Greek philosophy. He observes with wonder the extraordinary decline of Ionian science and the independence of thought that accompanied it, and he gives us several striking quotations that show forth the inquiring spirit of the Ionians and the deference to authority of later times. That Christianity was responsible for the decay he rejects as an obsolete view and he gives it as his opinion that Christianity was a mere concomitant of a decline that was otherwise inevitable.

Professor Farrington finds the explanation for this in the distribution of scientific knowledge: science was the preserve of the aristocracy. The function of religion was to maintain the oligarchical system, and it was felt that any widespread dissemination of knowledge would open men's eyes to this ulterior aim. This theme he ably expounds with reference to Plato, whom he depicts as a life-long political philosopher (p. 91). Plato placed no faith in human nature and invented the "Noble Lie" that the three classes of citizens, rulers, guardians, and workers, must bow to their lot and make no attempt to gain a different station in life from that to which they were born. Thus the religion of the Noble Lie was designed to make men contented with their lot—or at least resign themselves to it—and, in fact, obstinate offenders were to be punished by death. Epicurus and

Lucretius are, on the other hand, portrayed as emancipated thinkers who spent their lives fighting for freedom: "It is the specific originality of Epicurus that he is the first man known to history to have organized a movement for the liberation of mankind at large from superstition" (pp. 125-6). Here Professor Farrington displays great originality in his interpretations of these three philosophers and he supports his contention with many references to their works. That Epicureanism was a force to be reckoned with is evident from the steps that Cicero thought necessary to take to oppose it. Lucretius expounded it in poetical form in his *De Rerum Natura*, so that it should take root with the mass of mankind, and he was being successful in his aim. "Lucretius was not a poet looking for a subject, he was a man with a subject who chose verse as the form in which to present it. Lucretius would be Lucretius if he had written prose; he would not be Lucretius if he had not expounded Epicureanism" (p. 193). "A popular movement to teach Epicurean physics means a popular movement to abolish belief in the political function of the gods" (p. 189). The usual picture "shows an enlightened Senate struggling to stem the tide of oriental superstition that welled up from the motley populace below. But here was a powerful movement of rationalism spreading from below, carrying Italy by storm, as Cicero put it" (p. 189). "The composition of the *De Rerum Natura* was the culmination of an effort of Epicurean propaganda in Italy which had lasted more than one hundred years. The propaganda had been unwelcome to the Senate from the start. Nevertheless, it had made headway, such headway, indeed, that the philosophic effort of

Cicero was mainly directed to stemming the tide of its popularity. He hoped, by routing the Epicureans in the field of philosophy, to complete the victory he had achieved in the political field by crushing the Catalinarians" (p. 193).

Such in broad outline is the theme of the book. Let us now dwell on certain features of it in more detail.

It does not seem to be quite clear that the decay in Ionian science was due to the oligarchy. The oligarchy accounts for the political *status quo*, but does it account for the submerging of knowledge? Professor Farrington's postulates would seem to be the following: (1) the community had to be made content with the many unnecessary injustices imposed upon them by the oligarchy; the problem was that of "disseminating such ideas as would make the unjust distribution of the rewards and toils of life seem a necessary part of the eternal constitution of things, and of suppressing such ideas as might lead to criticism of this view of the universe" (p. 27); and (2) this could not be maintained if science began to spread. As he puts it, the problem for the Greek rulers was "to combine political ignorance with technical efficiency" (p. 26). In support of this he quotes Martha: "'At Rome above all, every man who ventured on a scientific explanation of a natural phenomenon seemed to be encroaching on the limitless power of the gods. In order to engage in science a man had to have the courage to declare his impiety. That is why the Romans remained so long in ignorance'" (p. 220). It follows that religion must have been a very dominant factor in maintaining the oligarchy. This position he summarizes as follows: "In the city-state,

where striking inequalities of wealth prevailed and where in consequence civil war was endemic and often violent, the religion of the State tended more and more to be transformed by the ruling-class into an instrument of mental oppression utterly incompatible with the spread of enlightenment. This was the main reason for the slow strangulation of the great speculative movement of natural philosophy. . . . The other main reason for the decay of Greek science . . . was its divorce from the productive activities of life which resulted from the prevalence of slave economy. Thus both causes for the ultimate failure of the great scientific movement of Greece have their roots deep in society" (pp. 164-5). The thread of this argument—while probably capable of being strengthened—seems too thin.

We may find a partial answer to the question in an interesting observation of the author's regarding arithmetic and geometry. He interprets arithmetic as being democratic and geometry as being aristocratic (p. 28). This certainly accords with the strange feature of Greek culture, that it was rich in geometry and correspondingly weak in arithmetic. Thus was aristocratic Greece at home with pure geometry but not with scientific applications. We should note, however, that, if this is a valid reason for the decay of science under the oligarchy, there is nothing ulterior about it in that it sprang from the aristocratic nature and was not devised for the political purpose of maintaining a condition of scientific ignorance. It is interesting to observe, in confirmation of this interpretation, firstly that the Ionians were *experimental* scientists, having therefore an attitude that, as Professor Farrington points out, is usually supposed to be foreign to Greece, and secondly

that this outlook decayed with the decay of science and with the growth of the oligarchy. The author has done us a service in drawing attention to this: Empedocles for instance "demonstrated the incorporeal nature of air by thrusting a funnel into water with the upper end closed and showing that the water could not enter until the finger was removed and the enclosed air released" (p. 57).

Now in none of this do we glean any reason for the rise of the oligarchical system. We might ask if the decay of science caused it or was caused by it? The latter is, as Professor Farrington assumes, the more likely; but once the decline was set in motion, the two probably acted and reacted with one another. The author would perhaps account for the rise of the oligarchy by the efforts of the more materially successful members of the community to maintain their position and by the fertile soil that superstition finds in men's minds. Any general explanation of this kind, however, would not suffice, because it would equally apply to more modern times in which we have to account for the decay of oligarchy and the rise of science.

Another general question arises: was the political philosophy of the oligarchy held consciously or not? Professor Farrington throughout gives the impression that its literary supporters, like Cicero, were unashamedly conscious of their ulterior aims, except where he writes: "Such a programme [oligarchy], of course, never exists in its naked simplicity as the conscious mental attitude of a whole class in society. It reveals itself only in moments of unguarded candour, or when there is a crisis of thought; and then, as a rule, only as part of

a complex of ideas whereby the noblest instincts may be enlisted on the side of obscurantism in thought and monopoly in wealth" (p. 225). It is to be regretted that this point was not made more clearly as the book progressed. It would be true to describe the book as an interpretation of the oligarchical attitude which was only partly conscious. It is unlikely that such doctrines could commend themselves in their nakedness to a large number of men. We should expect them to be disguised, rationalized, or transformed into a policy that was thought of as being for the good of the community. Thus a ruler might reason: the ignorant masses would wreck their own lives if given knowledge or power, so we must keep them from temptation and in their place; and unfortunately, not being descended from good stock, their lowly nature could not be elevated to a higher level. Thus the system would for the most part be *consciously justified, though unconsciously preservative of selfish interests*.

That an understanding of what forms the structure of a community is of the first importance there can be no doubt. Professor Farrington's opinion is emphatic. "Either our science must transform itself by the recognition that the history of its development is unintelligible without an understanding of its social origins; that men cannot be adequately trained in applied science without instruction in its social function; and that the obstacles to the progress of science can be external to it, in the sense that they rise out of the structure of society as well as out of theoretical errors; either this transformation must take place or science must retreat. The future of science is now plainly a political question. Either we must base our civilization

more thoroughly on scientific foundations, or we must destroy science itself. Both processes are taking place in the world to-day" (p. 27).

Though the book is well documented and contains a number of important quotations, one is left with the wish that it had been longer and fuller, with the feeling that it is not more than an introduction to the subject, and with the hope that having introduced his theme the author will now expand it at greater length. To be more precise: the book savours slightly of being a commentary to an audience well versed in the original writings of the Greek philosophers, and the argument would carry greater strength with most readers, including philosophers who have not made Greek thought their chosen field, if fuller expositions were given of the traditional interpretation of the Greeks, with a view to bringing to light more smoothly the inherent weakness of this interpretation.

CAVIAR AND CHIPS

By G. R. N. LIST

MEN BREAK BREAD together, but the "toast" they drink. Yet the "toast" was originally just that—pieces of bread or cake afloat in the cup. It is easy to see the connection between wafer and wine, and we know that once, food and wine were the same to us, when milk was both meat and drink. But we can take that for granted and concern ourselves now only with the fact that when men wished to honour their lady, they put in the cup that which would sweeten it to her taste.

From which, some may say, women's effect upon drinking was to spoil it. And certainly, Mme. Prunier notwithstanding, it is generally held that women's taste in matters of eating and drinking is less than men's. Yet, as to food, women have been cooks since the dawn of history. Why then do we belittle the taste of those who prepare for us what we find tastes good? I may be wrong but I think it is because long ago, even before great men kept servitors to taste their dishes, men feared to be poisoned? The fear of the unknown, the unwillingness to trust, the fact that fondness means a lowering of defences—all these made it likely that one might be poisoned by those nearest one? Wherefore so as not to be at their mercy one did not let womenfolk know what one thought of their food. One said they "don't know what's good", because they "spoil a good dish if they get the chance", hiding from them recognition that it was good, lest they make it bad.

Perhaps. It's a long time ago.

But certainly from that first toast, eating and drinking

became split as ritual. Men followed the cup, women the toast. And though there are several women among the great restaurant keepers, and many who appreciate fine cooking and fine choice of food, it must be admitted that as regards ceremony and celebration, the distaff side is less cheerful. Tea-shops aren't as convivial as taverns, and the afternoon bridge-party has not quite the spirit of darts.

If you go into a dining-room given over to women, say at a club or in a large store, you do not find that relaxation and dropping of ordinary cares which marks a pub or bar. In part, the reason is social, in part economic. One part of this is that neither in food or drink do men face anything they have actually had to prepare, wash, cut, and cook themselves. When women go out, though there is the pleasure at not having to organize or prepare a meal, there is still the knowledge of having had to and of having to again. There is the further back-knowledge, which attends all preparing of meals—will the man for whom it is meant be back in time? The almost certain knowledge that he won't, leads to the attempts to make the meal, the house, the mistress more attractive—baits to keep him at home, to call him back, so that he won't escape. And the strain of that comes out in the tea-shop and restaurant.

I stress this, at perhaps undue length, because it seems to me to explain a good many points in connection with our habits of eating and the places we eat in. Banquets, for instance, we think of in terms of food—they are feasts. But the social part, the speeches, are linked with the wine. One cannot, of course, talk with one's mouth full—or listen, lest the roast grow cold. Eating is something one has to turn away from one's

neighbours to do. Drink does not demand that—drinking is sign of fellowship; eating, expression of “if this doesn’t poison you, it won’t me”.

The grandeur of restaurants themselves is in marked contrast to the grandeur of drinking places. There is no Ritz in the pubs. The Ritz is, of course, a hotel and therefore as much for drink as for food. But you will not find that any place given over to drinking is as ornate as those designed to draw you to eat in them. The reason is not only that dining-out is apt to be an occasion, or if not, that the patrons are so rich and sophisticated that they must have rich surroundings; it is not only that women are taken out to dine, and must have settings appropriate to them. It is that old reason, the need to placate women for not eating at home.

One woman in particular—wife, mother, or cook. The person who has prepared, who is expecting. From whom one has run away. And to atone for that, the place one has run to must be extra smart, extra glittering, extravagant.

For, again talking tribally, to miss family meals meant breaking family ties. It meant deserting the hearth—perhaps for that of another. It meant “slinging one’s hook”—one’s pot hook. Moreover, if one didn’t eat at home, one didn’t bring food home. So the family went short. There was terrible responsibility about “dining-out”. As there was in that age which in so many ways was the culmination of centuries’ return to being primitive, the Victorian, when the family ate, at set times and in set numbers—the whole lot, or Pa would want to know why—and, even when staying in hotels, formed up and entered the dining-room in procession.

Notice also the anxiety which attends eating. There are cures for alcoholism, but only under a general head. There are not separate cures for whisky, beer-boozing, sherry-swigging. You don't see "claret clogs the liver" or "beer is bad for the bowels". It is just assumed that some people who drink too much would like to be cured.

Eating is different. There are daily flouted at us cures for constipation, for indigestion, acidity, flatulence, loss of appetite. From poster and paper we are told to eat more bread, to buy more fish: the merits of meat are proclaimed, eggs are extolled. We must eat fresh fruit—turn the corner or the page, canned fruit is as good. No, it is better. There is nothing like it.

And in case we eat all these things, there are warnings and remedies—Beans to put us right, Jelloids to give us stamina, Yeast to assist elimination, Halibut Oil to make up for deficiencies, Patent foods and extracts to make us sleep at night or to keep us awake during the day. We live in fear of over-eating and night-starvation. There's fright about food.

This, coupled with the family fear, makes it understandable why restaurants aren't at first as cheerful as pubs, and then why they have to try to be more so.

Let us now look at them and begin, not at the beginning, but at the end. The West End, to get it done with.

Coming from the West, for a long time the entrance to the West End seemed the Ritz and the Berkeley. The Hyde Park Hotel was sentinel. There is a string now of hotels in Park Lane, but even so, the great mass of the Ritz, with the lighter Berkeley the other side, seem like entrances to the eating world of the West

End. Up the street on the left are the Mayfair, Claridges, smaller but no less expensive restaurants. On the right, Jermyn Street with its half-dozen highlights. Ahead, Hatchetts and those two places in their heyday during the last war, Princes and the Piccadilly.

So much for the West End. What of the West Centre, or middle? The restaurants I have mentioned so far are the pleasure-places, where the upper class or the rich go for amusement. What of the middle class, where do they eat? Their eating-out falls into two classes. Pleasure—which is in big popular Corner Houses, the more commercialized Soho “spots” (*table d’hôte*—*hors d’œuvres* of beetroot, sardine, and cold egg, whitebait, chicken, vanilla ice, with Chianti), sometimes the Trocadero, with its own meal of *dinuit*. For the rest, many of them are at work. Midday meal is in City restaurants, those of stores for the women, and—a new development—Woolworth’s and milk bars.

Women’s lunch is hurried; men’s is not. The snack bar originated from the pub, but only because men spent so much time talking over their drink. Men go out at half-past twelve and sometimes do not get as far as a cold sausage or sandwich until a quarter to three. But it is women who have caused the spread of the snack bar, with its quick-lunch complex. The lunch-hour to women is shopping hour as well. Their time for talk, for relaxation, is tea.

Yet tea-rooms were not the first sign that the woman who could go out without chaperon had to be catered for. Verrey, of Regent Street, served lunches for ladies shopping as early as 1850. That was thirty years before the first Aerated Bread Company’s tea-shop, Lyons following fourteen years later still at 213 Piccadilly.

But the ladies' luncheons didn't prosper at Verrey's—possibly because the ladies did without lunch in order to shop a bit more, contenting themselves with a bun and a glass of milk or, if they were not too ladylike, a glass of port and piece of cake.

Then, the big stores arose, with refreshment rooms. They are not noticeably festive. The waitresses are usually tired or tattling. The customers aren't as content as might be. They are wondering if they will have time to go to that other department, they are disappointed that they haven't bought all they meant to or have spent more than they should; finally there is the question of payment. Female subservience to men in money matters until lately has resulted in that noticeable fact, that you rarely see one woman treating another; if you do, neither seems to be enjoying it. You will for this reason find women haggling over bus-fares and handing over a penny as if it were an unparalleled present.

When it comes to feeding, there is the further preventative of pleasure, the bargaining instinct. They want value for money. Value in food means, "what do you get for your shilling?" If a man wants a steak, he will go for it, and if it costs nearly all he is prepared to spend, he will cut out the rest. He knows what he wants to eat, and will pay the price. Women tend to look at the price first, and then see what they get for it, whether they want that or not. If they can get soup, fish, and coffee, for so-much, they have had a good lunch.

That is why a woman will always fall for the table d'hôte, unless she is being taken out by a man, and the pretentious menus popularized by the Corner Houses are sign of their predominantly feminine public.

The meals sound "a lot for the money". It is also to be noticed that Woolworth's, starting with snack bars, have expanded to a set meal—meat sixpence, vegetables threepence each. Total, one shilling—so cheap. Yet you can get a good tenpenny "cut off the joint with veg." at any good pub.

But women don't go to pubs. If the pub is man's paradise, the tea-room is woman's, and be it observed that whilst in pubs you hear little talk of women, in the tea-rooms you hear much chat, criticism, and often exchanges of confidence about men. Not only do women, on the whole, not go to pubs; men are, again speaking generally, averse from taking them there. First, men, as more conservative, cling longer to the idea that a pub is no place for a woman; secondly, if it is, there is some of the point of the pub gone. And we reach Soho.

The district is important in books on restaurants. In fact, it takes up proportionately more space in books than it does on the map. I think this is largely due to the fact that we are so used to apologizing about English cooking that we point with pride to the fact that in Soho there is every other kind. Actually, there is no need whatever to apologize about English cooking. It starts off with the advantage of some of the best food in the world—Hereford beef, Southdown mutton, Wiltshire bacon, Yorkshire pudding, Cornish cream, Devonshire and Irish butter, York ham (though Prague, and Virginia peach-fed rivals this), Welsh cheese and leeks, Worthing tomatoes, Cambridge sausages, Oxford marmalade, Yarmouth bloaters, Whitstable natives; the list goes on and on. We think of English peas, English strawberries, salmon, and all the things the Scots do in the way of oatmeal, shortbread, Dundee cake. We go

abroad and meet on the menus bifstek, bacon-and-eggs, plum cake, puding au riz, steak and kidney pudding, and many others, and learn with surprise how many English dishes there are. The chief trouble with English cooking comes when it tries to be French. And the next is that we get so little of it as English. But Jules, the Connaught Rooms, the Lord Belgrave among pubs, Snows, Stone's, Birch's, Overton's and plenty more among chophouses show gratefully how good our native food can be.

Soho, then, is really an exception. An exhibition of exoticism, in which exiles demonstrate the niceties of their native art. Within restricted radius, you may go Spanish, Greek, Chinese, Russian, Kosher, Indian, in your food, apart from the standardized French and Italian. Soho offers you salami, sauerkraut, arroz Cubana, rose-leaf jam, pink caviar. You won't get the rats which were a delicacy in Japan or the mice in honey which ancient Romans used as an appetizer. But you have your choice of snails, frogs, octopus, and bird's nest soup.

Yet finally, Soho should occupy a small part in London's feeding. There are restaurants there for which it is worth taking a bus and half one's lunch-hour for the sake of an appetizing meal, well-cooked, at ridiculous prices. There are also restaurants which started out sincerely, as attempts to make a living, deservedly flourished, were forced to expand, received publicity and at once became more concerned with getting more customers than in keeping clientele. They cater gradually for what I call the *matinée public*. A lot for a little, rather than a little well done. Here you will sometimes find the oil rancid, the food re-heated—all to pay for a commissionaire in time outside the door.

Soho, I suggest, owes its success for the need of the sexes to combine, and the male sex cannot invariably afford the expensive. Soho, being "foreign", supplied the festal air without the shadow of gloom at the cost.

Like the grand grills and restaurants, Soho places are mainly for pleasure-eating.

The next step is to where one eats because one has to keep going—the chop-houses, the dining-rooms, the side-street cafés whose windows are usually filled with sweets and cigarettes, the pubs, the snack-bars, and cabmen's shelters. Last thing, the fish-and-chip shops, the coffee-stalls.

And to know these, we go back in time a little.

Not necessarily as far as the monasteries and pilgrims' inns, supplying refreshment to pious travellers. As long as we remember that, that is all right. Let us remember also that the times when most was made of food were not necessarily those in which there was most eating; emphasis is often laid on rarity, and the pleasure the Tudors took in recounting what they ate may suggest that it was worthy of note, remarkable, in fact, rather special. We may note the intense pleasure Pepys, of the Plague, took in food. We may pass on to the rise of the coffee-house. The first opened in 1652, eight years before the Restoration, in St. Michael's Alley, Cornhill. The influence of the coffee-house was wide—not only as a club, but as the source of such institutions as Lloyd's. Tea came in, and a few years after Victoria's accession, two things were noted. The coffee-house tended to become a dining-room (in country towns you will still find the dining-room labelled "Coffee room"), and "the Elizabethan ordinary was no more".

It was estimated in 1842 that there were two hundred

eating-places, excluding taverns, in London. By a study of the reportage-literature of the time, we can gain a fairly clear picture of its eating-habits. Apart from the Reform Club, whose kitchen caused wonderment, for it baffled "the conception of those used only to ordinary culinary arrangements" because "the gastronomic art, certainly, never before had so many scientific appliances at its disposal". But for those who were not or could not be members, there were other establishments—Williams's boiled-beef shop in the Old Bailey, for instance, and soup-houses in Broad Street and St. Giles's, where twopence and threepence was charged for a bowl of soup, potatoes, and bread. The pub, as distinct from the chop-house, did not supply food. But you could take a steak or a chop to your "local" and have it cooked on the gridiron kept ready, for a penny. By 1882, Emerson was observing that the English "use a plentiful and nutritious diet. Beef, mutton, wheatbread and malt liquors are universal among the first-class labourers".

Would Emerson to-day record, I wonder, that sixteen of our forty million are living on less than is adequate, that the diet of half our population is deficient in iron, phosphates, and vitamins A and C? Progress seems not so much a mirage as a boomerang, for when we think late snacks are distinctive of our century, we find that in the last there was a regular service outside theatres of men selling ham sandwiches at one penny (now twopence) and hot potatoes for a penny.

We find too that, in the neighbourhood of Haymarket and Covent Garden, "there are many French restaurateurs whose rooms present the agreeable variety of ladies dining without any restraint from the observation of the male visitors."

Here is the origin of the restaurants lately mentioned, here also the development of coffee-house into chop-house, and the start of the snack—the steak you took with you, to be cooked as you drank.

All this is behind our eating, whether it is at a table in a grill, in a pew at a dining-room, on a bench in a cabman's shelter, or in the back part of an Italian-owned café. Chop-house, dining-room, and café may stay outwardly the same, but in the speed-up of life, their function changes.

(To be continued)

POETRY

PASCAL

O HAD HIS mother near her time been praying
Up to her crucifix and prayed too long
Until exhausted she grew stiff like wood,
The future of herself hung dangerous and heavy
From her uprightness like a malefactor,
And in her trance she renegotiated
The martyrdom which even in Auvergne
Would be demanded as the price for life ?

Knowledge was lifted up on Love but faced
Away from her towards the lives in refuge
Directed always to the moonstruck jeering neighbours
Who'd grown aware of being watched and come
Uneasily against their native judgement
And still were coming up the local paths
From all the gates of the protective town
And every crevice of the noon-hot landscape.

None who conceivably could hate him were excluded,
His back was turned to no one but herself
Who had to go on holding him and bear
The terror in their faces as they screamed " Be Angry "
The stolid munching of their puzzled animals
Who raised their heads from grazing : even ploughs
They'd left behind to see him hurt were noticed :
Nothing in France was disregarded but her worship.

Did then the patient tugging of his will
Not to look round for comfort shake her faith ?
O when she saw the magistrate-in-charge,
The husband who had given him to her look up

Into that fascinating sorrow, and was certain
That even *he* forgot her, did she then deny
The only bond they shared, the right to suffer
And join the others in a wish to murder?

Whatever happened he was born deserted
And lonelier than any adult: they at least
Had dwelt in childhoods once where dogs were hopeful
And chairs could fly and doors remove a tyrant;
Even the ablest could recall a day
Of diagnosis when the first stab of his talent
Ran through a beardless boy and spoilt the sadness
Of the closed life the stupid never leave.

However primitive, all others had their ferry
Over the dreadful water to those woods from which,
Irrelevant like flies that win a coward's battle,
The flutes and laughter of the happily diverted
Broke in effectively across his will
To build a life upon original disorder:
How could he doubt the evidence he had
Of Paris and the earth? His misery was real,

All roads led back into the nightmare garden
Where the great families who should have loved him
slept,
Loving each other, not a single rose
Dared leave its self-regard, and he alone was kneeling
Submitting to a night that promised nothing.
Not even punishment, but let him pray;
Prayer bled to death in its abyssal spaces
Mocked by the silence of their unbelief.

Yet like a lucky orphan he had been discovered
And instantly adopted by a gift ;
And she became the sensible protector
Who found a passage through the caves of accusation
And in the canyon of distress was able
To use the echo of his weakness as a proof
That joy was probable, and took the place
Of the poor lust and hunger he had never known.

And never told him he was weaker than the others,
Too weak to face their innocently brutal questions,
Assured him he was stronger than Descartes
And made him think it was his own finesse
That promised him a miracle and doubt by doubt
Restored the ruined château of his faith :
Until at last, one Autumn, all was ready
And in the night the Unexpected came.

The empty was transformed into possession,
The cold burst into flames ; creation was on fire
And his weak moment blazing like a bush,
A symptom of the order and the praise ;
And he had place like Abraham and Jacob
And was incapable of evil like a star
For isolation had been utterly consumed
And everything that could exist was holy.

All that was really willed would be accomplished :
The crooked custom take its final turning
Into the truth it always meant to reach :
The barrack's filthy oath could not arrest
Its step towards the just ; nor flesh annihilate
The love which somewhere every day persuades it,
Brought to a sensual incandescence in the dark,
To do the deed that has made all the saints.

Then it was over. By the morning he was cool,
His faculties for sin restored completely,
And eight years to himself. But round his neck
Hung now a louder cry than the familiar tune
Libido Excellendi whistled as he wrote
The lucid and unfair. And still it rings
Wherever there are children doubt and deserts
Or cities that exist for mercy and for judgment.

W. H. AUDEN

WHEN THE WIND BLOWS

THE FULLNESS OF our summer blows
In finished brightness down the wind;
The tree of comfort whips and bows,
Facing November rudely thinned.

And we shall walk more skeletoned
In beauty harder to the eye,
Trying what courage can be found
In less of leaves but more of sky.

LAWRENCE LEE

OBITUARY FOR BALLET

ROUND ONE THOUGHT I balance these my fingering
words,
Like maypole ribbons in the sun
They move in a child's fantastic maze
Spread out about the central spire.

I sway the sentences that part in every line
 With secrecy of strange humanity.
 I am the word that holds intricacies,
 I have anointed my own head.

* * * * *

The movement of music is their bodies' disease,
 (Who shall raise word against this art?)
 While in their spirits a fierce tirade of blankness.
 (And who dare break the swooning arch,
 Wounding with ugliness man's given grace?)
 The rhythm of hips is the basic stay of strain,
 (Who shall deny the lovers' act?)
 The poise of a cat, intense and light as it springs.
 (Who would not lift his rarest sense
 Tipping the metaphysical so?)

Dancers who beat the floor with your gentle feet,
 I am among you too,
 I am one whom need has taught also speed,
 Goal in a dancing shoe.
 But I have found a life of nothingness,
 The primal step of rhythm sound
 Is nowhere near the heart, is something less
 Than circus horses that waltz the ground.

Too easily their minds accept the sacrificed,
 With clapping hands from unmeaningness of thought,
 With gasping sounds from seething breath distraught,
 Falsely enticed.
 The suppleness of movement, smooth or fierce in flood,
 They press from the technical swing, not their lungs.
 Like steeple-jacks they mount the dizzy rungs
 Daring their own blood.

Between the admirers and the admired a current is fired,
Deep the affinity grows,
While the core of this sensual shuffle is cankered more,
Flowerless is this bud-rose.
Their dung could not feed the pregnant seeds of the land,
Dancers know no soil.
Their guts are strings of wax soft-warmed in the hand,
Shamed at man's flesh they recoil.

So acts of my dancing world are façades of emotion.
(Feel for the sweep of this woman line !)
They know only the greatness of work's quick surge.
(See where she dips and fans the wind,
Visionary in the instant stay !)
The men never ramp below their sculptured waists.
(Pick out your eyes and see no reflection !)
The women consent to this eerie phenomenon.
(Cut off your ears and hear no applause,
And there's chance you will dance to the sun once
more !)

* * * * *

A rustling of swallows wind-reckoning, flutter wings,
Each pine-needle tail splayed open wide,
So fluid to steep the evening pause
And prise the envious quietude shrilly.
Within the range of heaven there's none shall gauge
Each going and each coming race.
The clock hands have no pace for birds
And seasons mark time's joint better than cogs.

ANNABEL FARJEON

BE MASTER

By GEORGE EWART EVANS

HE WAS A small man ; very dark, with bright eyes that burned up suddenly. When he was washed, after work in the evening, his thick black moustache made him look sullen. They called him John Price Lonely, because of his retiring ways and his long walks on the mountain by himself. He was chief deacon in Ebenezer Chapel and never missed a service, week-night prayer meetings included. His wife was an important woman in the Chapel as well, treasurer of the sewing-class and the social committee ; a friend of the minister's wife. She was tall, with a pale face and a tight-drawn mouth, faint vertical lines always showing on her upper lip.

They rarely walked out together. Even on Sunday, when they both went to Chapel, the husband started out first, half an hour before the time to begin, to see that everything was ready for the service. They had been married fifteen years and had no children.

He was the most faithful member of the Chapel. When they were for a long time without a minister, it was he who kept the Chapel together. Then one night, sitting in the Big Seat listening to the visiting preacher, he had a call, and knew that Capel Ebenezer had ceased to fill his soul. The preacher tore away the curtain of long and familiar listening, and revealed to John Price his deep, unexpressed discontent with Ebenezer.

"Keep not the Word to thyself," said the preacher. "Cast it forth. Scatter it abroad. Take it to your work ; to the mine and the field. Take it out to the highways and byways."

The words struck John Price like a blow and he looked around the bleak, indifferent, half-empty Chapel and saw a new Light.

At the Deacons' meeting after the service, he proposed that the Chapel should hold week-night meetings out on the Square of the town. The Deacons were surprised but did not openly oppose him. They left the proposal over until their next meeting. But they did nothing, and when he saw that they would not be moved to take the Word on to the street, he made up his mind to leave the Chapel.

When he told his wife, she looked at him as though he were mad. "Leave Capel Ebenezer where you been faithful for twenty years. Leave everything and break with all my friends!" But he was firm; and then she closed up and was silent for days.

The end of the week came and with it the half-yearly special meeting at the Chapel. She went by herself, but the new costume she had bought, and the feathers in her hat were waste, for there was an emptiness within her. She was certain that everyone was looking at her and she could hardly hold her head up in the pew.

John Price didn't come home until late that night. He had been up on the mountain, preaching; on a rock near the old railway cutting, where the courting couples parade. When he told her where he had been, she laid her head on the table and wept for the shame of it. He was patient and asked her why she cried.

"Why am I crying? Why am I crying?" she accused. "Is it a fit thing to stand preaching up there on that mountain for all the 'crwts' of boys and girls to make a mock of you? The Shame! The Shame!" Her standing in the Chapel would be shaken; her

influence with the other women would fall away, and the slow-built structure of her self-respect, overlaying her disappointment at not having children, would crumble.

He made no reply, and then the struggle began. They moved about the house like strangers. She rarely spoke except to ask about his meals.

This went on for a fortnight until one afternoon, when the woman went down the street to shop, she met Mrs. Lewis, Number Nine, who stopped her to talk about the Chapel. In the middle of the conversation Mrs. Lewis suddenly said, with a sideways glance at her, "Surprised I was, indeed, Mrs. Price, to see that your husband had joined those Pentecostals. After being in Capel Ebenezer for so many years !"

She never heard the rest of the woman's talk. It was as much as she could do to get home before she broke down. The Pentecostals ! Everyone would know about it. She could tell by the way people looked at her that they knew. The men on the corner, by the Italians' shop ; old Jenkins the Milk sunning himself on the doorstep ; the boys coming home from school : "Her old man's in the Pentecostals. Claphands : clap-hands for Jesus, boys. I'm H.A.P.P.Y. I'm H.A.P.P.Y. I know I am I'm sure I am. I'm. . . Repent ye for the kingdom of Johnny Lonely is at hand."

When he came home from work there was no bath or meal prepared. He found her upstairs on the bed, her hair down, her eyes wild and accusing. When he approached her calling her gently by her name, she screamed out like an animal.

He went down, washed himself and prepared his own meal. He heard her moving about in the room above, as he ate. When he went upstairs that night, he found

the bedroom locked. He slept in the spare bed which he made up in the back-room over the kitchen.

After that the conflict entered a new phase. She gave him no rest, for she determined to force him to give up speaking in the streets and singing hymns in the Square. When he came home in the afternoon, she served his meals mechanically, never varying what she prepared ; boiled potatoes, cabbage, and a bit of meat, day after day. One afternoon he was late because of a big fall in the pit, and the meal was as dry as sticks. She placed it before him without explanation and by her silence challenged him to protest.

Occasionally she sat opposite him at the meal, not eating anything herself, but talking all the while, railing and accusing. At other times she sat in silence, staring into the fire, not saying a word. In the evenings she went out to pour out her troubles to her chapel friends. One night she brought two of them home, and they sat in the front parlour, talking in whispers, while he brooded in the kitchen.

He soon began to show signs of the dual struggle he was waging, with his wife, and with himself. He shaved off his moustache, and this made him look years older. His cheeks had fallen in and his eyes were like two burning coals. He couldn't stay in any one place any length of time. After work, if he wasn't helping at the meetings, he walked miles on the top of the mountains, hoping to find sleep afterwards in exhaustion.

He got tired easily at work. He was a repairer and a good workman, but the under-manager, watching him put up an arm and a collar of timber, said, half in jest, half in earnest, " John bach, you're getting old. You're losing the knack with that axe of yours."

People got to know of the conflict between John Price and his wife, and at work he heard comments and jokes, which burned him to the bone ; though outwardly he kept the mask of enduring-to-the-end.

About this time he was repairing near Big Ned Pugh's place in Sam Wynne's district in the pit. Pugh was a mountain of a man, as hard as the rock he was working. He was a terror in drink ; even when he was sober a thing came into his mind and he said it.

Just after eleven o'clock, the men came down from the coal-face to the heading, to have food. Big Ned and his buttty squatted near John Price, who sat against the wall of rock, staring ; his food-tin unopened beside him.

"What's the matter, John ?" shouted Big Ned above the noise of the air escaping from the blast-pipe near by. "Off your food ?"

He started to reply, but instead reached for his food-tin and began eating. But Big Ned kept on.

"They do tell me, John, that your old 'oman is taking more than her share of the bed." Ned paused to take a huge chunk of cheese into his mouth. "If you do let the old 'oman have the trousers, God help you is what I say ; God help you !"

He listened but made no sign that he had heard a word.

"Take a tip from me, Johnny bach," Big Ned went on, "she'll ride you to hell, if you'll let her ; ride you to hell she will." He took a drink from his water-jack and belched loudly :

"If I were you, do you know what I'd do ? I'd skin the backside off her, by Dafydd I would. Lock the door and leather her over the house. There's only one way for them ; I can tell you that."

The big man rose up and slowly emptied the remaining water from his jack. Then he leaned over and tapped him confidentially on the shoulder:

“Take a bit of advice from me, boyo. Go home this afternoon and show who’s master. As soon as she comes to the door let her have it straight away, then start to show her her business. It’s the only way, Johnny.”

He watched Big Ned swagger his huge bulk back towards the face. “The only way. Be master. Be master.” The struggle was given a new focus. “Be master. Be master !” He went back to his work and attacked the rough timber he was shaping with a quick fury. He exorcized with each blow of the axe the evil thoughts that kept arising, but as he buried it in the timber, it seemed to respond each time. “Be master. Be master.” The wood chips went flying beyond the light-ring of his lamp and sweat poured from his body.

At the end of the shift he almost ran home. Yet, when he came to the door, his purpose ebbed from him. She was there in the passage as he came in, and as soon as he pushed the door open she went at him : “Watch where you’re treading, please. I’ve just polished the lino.” He passed meekly by her and went into the kitchen. Then suddenly came the back-flood of despair, and he threw himself on to the sofa ; his fists clenched, holding his ice-cold temples.

She came in and saw him lying there in his working-clothes, and shouted out for her soiled cushions. But he took no notice ; he never heard. Nor did he stir when she attempted to drag him off by his coat. He lay like a log, his heavy working boots hanging over the edge of the sofa.

Calmer, she sat down at the table and started to rail at him, venomously, going back and picking out small things from a long past. But his still body gave no sign of listening. At length she gave up, thinking he was asleep.

But he was not asleep, although all his senses were numb. His soul seemed to shrink to its starting point and from the bottom of his despair he began to pray. Through his mind went all the prayers he could remember. He repeated them all, tumbled together without meaning. He silently spoke every invocation he could recall from his long experience of chapel-listening and praying. The best praying-preacher he had heard came to his mind, and he called out with his manner and his supplication. Silently he raised his voice singing and shouting ; lifted up wild arms, in his mind-image ; knelt down in humiliation ; jumped up and raised loud fists to heaven.

He lay still all the while, though he was no longer cold and exhausted. His brow was like fire and a strange fervour pulsed through his body. And he went on in a still ecstasy ; warmed to his " hwyl ".

He cried out with the Preacher and Isaiah. He lamented and foresaid evil things with Jeremiah. Daniel, he knelt before an open window to the world. Micah and Amos. Then he sat under a juniper tree with Elijah—Elijah who was fleeing from a woman.

His blood suddenly ran fire all over him. There was a loud coursing in his ears. The veins on his forehead began to swell and his knees pressed hard against the sofa as if he would rise up.

Elijah ! Fleeing from a woman ! Jezebel the daughter of Ethbaal. " Jezebel who hath cut off the prophets of

the Lord. . . . The cursed woman of Jezreel." Then a voice kept saying insistently :

"What doest thou here, Elijah? What doest thou here? Go return on thy way, and Jehu the son of Nimshi shalt thou anoint."

He became dead-calm; the furious pulsing in his head ceased and all his confusion fell away. He got up slowly on to his knees, looking sideways under his half-open eyelids at the woman, who still sat at the table. Then, Jehu, he rose up.

She screamed when she saw him. His face was changed; distorted. She made towards the door but he slid across the table and caught her by the hair. Then he pressed her head against the seat of a chair, until she knelt on the floor. Taking off his belt with its heavy metal buckle, he began to beat her with all his strength. She screamed, but he drowned her cries with his shouting :

"Jezebel. Thou Jezebel. Master in my house. Cursed woman. The prophets of the Lord. Master in my house. The prophet of the Lord."

And her scream became a quiet whimpering. He dragged her out through the back door and threw her down the steps on to the little area below, shouting all the while, "Throw her down. Throw her down."

Then he jumped from the door down on top of her with his heavy boots. When she was still he dragged her into the coal-shed and locked the door.

IN THE SOUTH

By OSWELL BLAKESTON

THE LITTLE RAYS of sunshine bit him in a hundred places ; the solar ants and their red biting.

His hand wandered from his side to the bottle of wine. He saw it stretch across the table ; but, when it went too far from him, he could no longer do anything to help it. There was the white wine on the green table like an oratory in a meadow of verdant grass ; and there was his hand, a lost pilgrim.

Yet, that morning, he had been more than a man, a priest at the altar. The women had looked at him, knowing that the thunder, the lightning, the winds were imprisoned in the knots of his girdle.

He had been left alone to take off his vestments.

The sun had mounted in the sky, till it was too hot for a fat old man to pray or be damned. There was no memory left, no will. Perhaps a new god would be born in the night, and he would serve Him also in the cool of the morning, in the scarlet and gold of the church window.

A caterpillar fell from the tree, curled into a quiet ball, waited for the day of judgment, and then measured its length in the direction of the priest's hand, the hand which had fallen limp on the table.

The priest saw the insect pause, and then he felt the prickling sensation across his knuckles. He saw his hand move to squash the caterpillar between the mill of his fingers. Then he was like a drunk man, too lazy to wipe away the vomit. He sat staring at the mark on the green table-top, wondering what it was that ought to make this intolerable.

It came to him in a flash—Jeanne, the new serving girl with her humble piety, her love of ministering to the man of God. How could he explain to Jeanne the stain on the table, the little death in the heat of the midday sun?

Jeanne's father had given her form but had forgotten to fill the cup with his blood. She was made for the cool of nothingness that flows from the cities of cloud. Jeanne! who thought that the priest sat in the garden and counted with the angels the feathers in their wings.

He urged his hand to find his handkerchief. He rubbed the mark and spread the stain.

Somehow, he poured another glass of wine. His hand raised it to the lips that pursed themselves towards the hand. He managed to get the empty glass back on the table.

Jeanne came down the path towards him. He saw her remote, translucent in her fragile spirituality. She spoke, under the burden of heat, softly and coolly. She spoke of chicken and salad, of strawberries and creamy cheese.

"First, my child, we shall pray." First! before what?

The armies of red ants beat around him; but she was as a sip in a glass of wine. He watched her bury her face in her hands to pray.

Then he called to her, "Jeanne! Jeanne! there is something you must do for me. Bring a wet cloth; the green table is soiled. Perhaps it was some bird?"

He heard a rushing noise, and his vision showed him the sparrow falling from the branch, lying still with upturned claws which scratched clouds across the sky.

A THEATRE IN THE TRENCHES (1917-1918)

By WINIFRED GRAHAM WILSON

I FIRST HEARD of it somewhere perhaps about 1925 from a German who in the last war had served with the Eighth Army on the Eastern Front. He spoke as a spectator and told me of the fascinating performances he had himself seen several years before.

He did not speak critically, but much as a child would speak who was describing its first view of a lit-up Christmas tree. The memory of the plays seen in early 1918 was enshrined in his mind as of something apart from life, something far removed from the dreadful business of bombing which had been his allotted task in those days in Baltic lands. This illusion of separateness was heightened by the fact that the actors he had seen in that trench theatre were not human. They were skilfully carved and moulded puppets stringed to surprising perfection of movement, made completely by men actually within the lines.

It was not till some ten years after hearing his story that I was able to fill in the gaps. I had been reading Max von Boehn's *Dolls and Puppets*, and I came to the last chapter of all. It was headed "How Our Marionette Theatre Started", and was written, I noticed, by one Hans Stadelmann, not by Von Boehn himself.

Yet even then it conveyed nothing special to me until I began to read the text. Then to my intense and delighted amazement I discovered it was a detailed account of the very marionette theatre the quondam German soldier had told me about all those years ago, since when I had carried in my mind a strangely clear

picture of a stage of tiny moving figures giving joy to many thousands of men.

The other day as I read my newspaper and saw the various Baltic place-names that were mentioned in the news I went to my bookshelf and took down my *Dolls and Puppets*. Carefully I re-read the story of Hans Stadelmann's theatre, and wondered where Hans Stadelmann is now.

Stadelmann it seems was a Munich painter and his friend Barthels an actor also of Munich. Strangely—yet perhaps not so strangely with death always threateningly near—they began to talk of their childhood and neither of them “could say enough” about the puppet theatre each had had as a boy. From those memories an idea germinated: the two men would build a puppet theatre in the trenches.

So colossal a task did this seem at the outset that they began on a shadow theatre. They carved figures from old military post boxes, then painted them. But as they were designed for a shadow play and not for a three-dimensional one, all the figures were of necessity flat. The play was called *All Unnecessary Luggage Must Go*. The first performance was given in no less unlikely a place than the bombers' dug-out. The performances were continued for several weeks then winter came and gripped the land in ice.

Fighting round Riga was over. There was a period of waiting. Now ambition soared higher. Stadelmann and Barthels conceived the idea of producing the old time puppet play of Doctor Faust. Barthels it was true could act, and Stadelmann could paint, but neither felt himself equal to carving figures in the round.

So they went, when opportunity offered, to see

Konrad Buchner of the Tenth Company, for Konrad was a Munich sculptor and the very man for the task. Stadelmann and Barthels were afraid Buchner might "chuck them out" when they arrived at his dug-out with their request that he should help them, but far from chucking them out he welcomed them with open arms.

He managed to get clay and make models of Faust and Mephisto. He discovered elder wood near by, and from this elder wood "working with the most primitive tools, he wrested one figure after another". Mephisto and Faust were followed by the Duke of Parma and Hanswurst. Then came Orestes and "various hellish spirits".

The great difficulty was the obtaining of materials for the costumes, for the Eighth Army was far removed from human habitation. But difficulties seemed to serve only to increase inventiveness, and it was amazing how ingenious some of the dresses were.

"A woollen helmet became Faust's grey mantle, a handkerchief painted with flaming sulphuret of mercury was sacrificed for Mephisto's costume." An old sand sack "made presentable with noble colourings" served for the costume of Orestes. Trousers for the Duke of Parma "were made of the silk from the parachute of a French rocket light-ball; gilded string was used as an embellishment for the doublets, key-chains as sparkling chains of office; lead shot, matches—all came in handy".

Buttons of a tiny enough size were supplied by peas glued on to the little tunics and coats. But unfortunately "next morning the rats, much to the annoyance of Buchner, had eaten them". Stadelmann, however,

circumvented these rodent button-devourers. He "gilded new pea-buttons with bronze strongly smelling of turpentine, and this took away the rats' appetite".

All this time the building of the marionette stage was being carried on. It was prepared in the strangest of workshops; this time an abandoned dug-out in danger of collapsing and "between the half-rotten beams, which formed ceiling and walls, hung down great icicles".

Eventually the first performance was to be given. An old shed formed the auditorium. It was supposed to hold a hundred, "but two hundred crammed in, and four hundred stood outside." The audience needed no other spur than the interest of the performance to hold their attention; Hanswurst's philosophy roused their laughter, Faust's despairing end moved them almost to tears.

The commanding officer wished the performances to be given daily so that all the men of the regiment could see them. And see them these soldiers eagerly did, some of them tramping "as long as six hours through the snow from adjoining trenches; again and again new crowds filled the house down to the last seat".

Other plays were prepared, new figures to fill the parts were painstakingly carved out, stringed, and dressed. New scenery was made to fit the productions.

An order came from headquarters: an eight weeks' tour with the theatre was to be made through the "whole province of the Eighth Army in Livonia, Esthonia, and Courland," and the plays produced in the principal towns before both the military and civil population.

Strange to remember all this—Germans forcing out Russians twenty years or so ago from Dorpat, Pleskau,

Narwa, Riga, Mitau—all in the Baltic States—and yet they had time for a puppet theatre.

Puppets or bombs? rather than “guns or butter?” would be the touchstone. And possibly “puppets” would be the answer more often than we can ever know.

LITERARY INTELLIGENCE

IFAN KYRLE FLETCHER, of 26 Old Bond Street, advertises at £2 5s., a *History of the Horn-Book*, with 300 illustrations and a pocket at the back containing three actual horn-books, one of oak, one of card, and one of ivory.

* * *

Valentines and Dabbities of the mid-nineteenth century form a collection of 74 items offered by the same firm for 5 gns. "The Valentines are of the satirical type and the verses accompanying them are full of rough and ready humour." The collection is mounted in a small quarto album in half green morocco, and was made by the Glasgow printer who issued them.

* * *

Elizabeth Madox Robert's new book, *Black is My Truelove's Hair*, is announced for publication by Robert Hale.

* * *

The Golden Cockerel Press publish *The Wisdom of the Cymry*, a translation of ancient triads, made by Winifred Faraday from the earliest available Welsh sources. Triads (described as "terse statements of three related facts") are peculiar to the Celtic people of Wales. They are of extreme antiquity, coming from sources older even than the Ancient Britons and most translations are buried in volumes long out of print. Miss Faraday's is the first collated translation. One edition is limited to sixty numbered copies, bound in cloth of gold, at 2 gns., but the general reader is given an opportunity "of examining a philosophy remarkable

both for its simplicity and its maturity ” by an unlimited edition, priced at 5s.

* * *

The Oxford University Press publish this month a new biographical and critical study of Christopher Marlowe. The author is F. S. Boas, and the price 15s.

* * *

Gertrude Stein's *The World is Round* (Batsford, 7s. 6d.) is described by the publishers as “ a delightful ‘ juvenile ’ which will appeal to young and old alike ”. It is illustrated by “ decorations ” in colour and line by Sir Francis Rose.

* * *

Railway items are frequent in the catalogue of Arthur Rogers, 5 Saville Place, Newcastle-on-Tyne, 1. These include a list of the trains on the North Eastern to be withdrawn or re-timed owing to the National Strike of Miners, “ from March 12, 1912 until further notice ” (5s.); a first edition of extracts from the diary of Mr. Mewburn, the first Railway solicitor (augmented with newspaper cuttings—10s. 6d.); and a report by Robert Stephenson on the Atmospheric Railway (2 gns.). This idea, by which engineless trains were impelled by pressure, was actually put into use, but Stephenson's report killed it.

* * *

James Laughlin's *New Directions* (Norfolk, Connecticut, U.S.A.) was founded “ to counteract, in its small way, the tendency to treat a book as nothing more than a package of merchandise ”. Its new publications include Henry Miller's *The Cosmological Eye*

(\$2.50), stories and poems by Dylan Thomas (*The World I Breathe*—\$2.50), and *In the American Grain* (\$1.00), a collection of essays by William Carlos Williams, described as “a poet’s interpretation of American history”.

* * *

The annual volume, *New Directions in Prose and Poetry*, which may be described as an American *New Writing*, contained work by these and other authors, including Elizabeth Bishop, Kenneth Patchen, Lawrence Durrell, Robert Fitzgerald, and Garcia Lorca. The book runs to over 400 pages and costs \$3.

* * *

Victor Hugo’s works, eighty volumes bound in half morocco, were offered at a recent sale in London. No one bid even five shillings for them. But Mr. Barry Ono, of Clapham, recently sold an armful of penny dreadfuls for £60.

* * *

Indexes for the last two volumes of *Life and Letters To-day*, are now available, price 1s. each.

* * *

Two contributors to our December number, H. B. Mallalieu and John Malcolm Brinnin, are the recipients of prizes for poetry in the United States. The former has been awarded the Harriet Monroe Memorial Prize of one hundred dollars for his *Four Poems*, published in the August issue of *Poetry*; the latter receives the Jeannette Sewell Davis Prize, of the same sum, for *Two Poems*, printed in the September issue of the same magazine.

REVIEWS OF BOOKS

LITERARY CRITICISM

DONNE'S IMAGERY: A STUDY IN CREATIVE SOURCES. MILTON ALLAN RUGOFF. Corporate Press, Inc., New York. \$2.50.

ALTHOUGH A BEGINNING was made by Walter Whiter in 1794, it is only in this century that any serious work has been done on writers' imagery. Some of it has been of a general nature; some on particular poets—notably that on Shakespeare by Dr. Clemen in Germany, and Professor Spurgeon's on Shakespeare, Bacon, and certain Elizabethan dramatists. But despite the intense critical interest in the Metaphysicals in the last quarter of a century, despite the fact that it is in terms of their special kind of image (the conceit) that they have been chiefly characterized, this is the first exhaustive analysis of Donne's imagery.

Using Professor Spurgeon's definition of "image", Mr. Rugoff collects, classifies, and examines the live figures from both the poetry and prose. A statistical table is appended, but his method differs from Spurgeon's in attaching less importance to the mere number in each group.

Here for the first time we have the data for extended comparisons with his contemporaries. Some are already made: we are shown how Donne's interest in medicine is chiefly scientific and learned, whereas Shakespeare's is human; the difference between their light-and-fire images; the unimportance of the numerous images from daily life; the surprising absence of sensory details; the relative paucity and ordinariness of his nature and classical images. We can also understand

better how Donne, drawing mainly on learning, science, the mechanical, technical, esoteric, and inobvious for precise, surprising, and unique illustrations, has been of special interest to this age. Extremely conscious in his choice, "he tended to avoid not only the cloudy and the hackneyed but all images with emotional associations," not because he was capable of less feeling than others or out of mere whim or perversity, but because his "mind was so operative throughout the process of creation that the final statement of feeling is made in intellectual terms".

Since imagery affords the best analytical approach to the creative imagination, it is to be hoped that the present competent, well-written study (which might perhaps have included a chapter on the development of his imagery) will be followed by others—first of all by that of Milton, now being made by another American.

TERENCE HEYWOOD

ESSAYS AND ADDRESSES. OLIVER ELTON.

Arnold. 7s. 6d.

THERE IS A pleasant variety about the eleven literary papers collected together for Professor Elton's new book. Two are given to Russian authors, Pushkin and Chekhov; two to Karel Čapek; three Englishmen are present, Shakespeare (his style), Byron (an estimate, and a generous one, of his value to-day), and Bridges (an analysis of the *Testament of Beauty*); there are two essays of a more general nature on "Reason and Enthusiasm in the Eighteenth Century" and "The Nature of Literary Criticism"; and obituary notices of George Saintsbury (this reprinted from *Life and Letters To-day*) and the great Spanish scholar, James

Fitzmaurice-Kelly. It was not in the nature of most of these that they should exhaust their subjects, and the author in addition to a nicely calculated amount of authoritative but never dogmatic exposition has been careful to leave his audience with some useful finger-posts. Their common virtues come from Professor Elton's knowledge of many literatures, his interest in background and biography, his strong common sense and level judgment, and the graceful, erudite style to which he has accustomed us.

Possibly the most important of these papers is the one in which the author of the *Surveys* discusses some of the principles of his craft. But it is not the most interesting. Indeed, I find myself hauled away from the essays on established English authors to those on Pushkin, Chekhov, and Čapek. In the nature of things readers, like Chaucer's husbands, "loven novelrye," and I doubt not much of the charm and freshness here comes from the (to me) largely unknown subject matter. And it is certainly harder to write of "Style in Shakespeare" without a trace of that clapperclawing of the vulgar the dramatist himself deplored than it is of *Krakatit* and *The Bronze Horseman*. So these particular essays have the vim and intensity and alertness that result from a man's being in love with his subject. They are the core of the volume. GWYN JONES

NOVELS

TO TOWN. RANDALL SWINGLER. The Cresset Press. 7s. 6d.

To Town TRACES the development of a young boy, Nat, in a squalid provincial town. The story has a symbolic

ending. Nat approaches London, runaway, and already disillusioned, while Frank, his older cousin, goes up confidently as an unemployed Marcher "finding a new world". The book is a sincere attempt to show, in fictional form, how slum life corrodes the adolescent. One or two vivid episodes stand out, but the whole is written in a flat monotone.

Sunshine does sometimes, if very rarely, penetrate slum attics, but there is no relief to the gloom of the self-consciously proletarian novel. The formula is well known: strikes, strike-breakers, slums, bread and dripping, violent deaths, wet weather. These novels are greyer than life itself.

It is an accusation that most honest proletarian writers have to face. The procedure with too many of us is this: we have a socially correct, a laudable theme, the major theme of our time—if you like—and in our enthusiasm we dump, unreservedly, the whole burden of our story upon it. . . . The plot? Oh, the plot comes along. Look after the theme and the plot will take care of itself.

It's not surprising that many of our efforts look like a fictionalized version of a Mass-Observers' notebook; dull monochromes, with schematic characters and pieces of grafted descriptive writing which have no organic relation to the novel itself. We should have learnt by this time that the theme alone is not sufficient to bring the characters into convincing interrelation.

GEORGE EWART EVANS

THE BLASTED BURNING BALL. STEPHEN SLANT.
Bodley Head. 7s. 6d.

TO BE UNREADABLE, a novel must attain a certain level of competence, a mediocrity which makes every sentence

and every thought trite. Books below that level become increasingly interesting. Their badness is creative, their incompetence original; until one reaches at the very bottom of bad writing, such delectable authors as Amanda Ros.

Stephen Slant has not attained such depths as the immortal Amanda. He is not in the same class as Beverley Nichols. But he has staked a modest claim on one of the higher patches of that valley. For anybody with a masochistic urge to get cold shudders, *The Blasted Burning Ball* can be highly recommended. You never know what puckish little horror the next page holds in store.

Henry, a witty, brilliant, literary sort of fellow, is married to Celia, intelligent, amusing, left-wing. But Ann, intelligent, amusing, and left wing, comes to tea and stays over at the bungalow instead of going back to Aunt Mary at Clacton. On page 1, I expected that Henry was going to kiss Ann. But I was wrong. He doesn't even ask her until page 40. "If you stay here a moment longer I shall—I shall try to—well, to flirt with you," says Henry.

Between page 40 and page 126, Celia and Ann and Henry discuss Henry's asking Ann for a kiss and on page 126, Henry does kiss her. "There was a sort of large, plummy that's-thatness about it all." Page 127.

Unfortunately, despite the that's-thatness, it only took up 30,000 words and everybody knows that a novel is 60,000 words. So for the remainder of the book, Henry lives with Ann and then with Celia and then with Ann again; and when finally they decide that they can't share him, they go away to the bungalow to live together for a fortnight, while a third young woman

called Myrtle ("Myr . . . tle, the flat tinkle of a little leaden bell") turns up to live with Henry in a flatlet.

One of the troubles about first novels like this, is that their authors can never be quite certain whether they are writing comedies of manners, psychological studies, tragedies, or social tracts. The result is that they write *Blasted Burning Balls*.

A. CALDER-MARSHALL

IN THE TEETH OF THE EVIDENCE. DOROTHY L. SAYERS. Gollancz. 7s. 6d.

STOP PRESS. MICHAEL INNES. Gollancz. 7s. 6d.

"Mr. —'s later books are successful because everything is subject to rules which the reader knows. There is generally a puzzle which the reader can solve by means of the rules—and that implies that in the little universe of the book the reader is master. The books—though the reader is hardly aware of it—cater for the need of security."

THIS IS FROM Mr. Innes's new crime work and dictionary of quotable maxims. It has special reference to such a writer as Miss Sayers and her immense popularity, for she is the crowned queen of a famous club for detective authors who have sworn to keep the rules.

Unfortunately Miss Sayers's latest does not give her an opportunity to show what she can do in and with her own world: it is, in fact, a collection of stories which are little more than anecdotes. An odd bit of information acquired, and hey-presto Miss Sayers has a neatly turned piece. For instance, the business that oil will rise to the top of a bottle of Noyeau (a liqueur flavoured with oil of bitter almonds or peach stones), if it is left standing for forty years or so, and then may

pour death in the first glass—this is enough for *Bitter Almonds*. There is no time in the anecdote for an elaborate game with rigid rules; it is principally a statement although that statement is (and Miss Sayers's constant and countless readers will not need to be told) always under the rule of fair play.

As far as it goes *In the Teeth of the Evidence* is perfectly amusing; but the reader must not try to remember how "securely satisfying" Miss Sayers can be at her best.

The reviewer, whose task it is to let the reader know what to expect from a book, has an overtime job with *Stop Press*. Perhaps it is best to begin by saying that Mr. Innes has little to do with the world of rules, maps, conventional cross questioning, etcetera. His characters indulge in much and brilliant donnish talk, and move with startling equanimity in scenery which is a gentle mockery of Gothic Revival horrors. The reader is never quite certain whether the next paragraph is going to plunge him into fancy or fantasy, into skit or brilliance. At one moment he is dazzled by a turn of thought and a rambling of phrases, at the next he is clutched down into a whirlpool of doom, and at the next he is caught in admiration at the author's gift for slipping in a bit of padding.

The plot is no ordinary plot. A writer of shockers finds that his stock-in-trade is turning against him; and, in the midst of metaphysical speculations, his mind is most imperilled by the fact that not only are people doing in real life the things his characters have done in books, but they are doing the things he has *thought* that he *might* make them do. If it is a trick, whence the trickster's clairvoyance? That is the main and astonishing problem, for which many and clever solutions

are offered (mental, psychic, and diabolical) before the author reveals the final and cleverest solution of all.

I hope I have said enough to help anyone to decide whether he wants to read Mr. Innes and sacrifice security for a number of thrills on levels where they are not often obtainable.

OSWELL BLAKESTON

GREY BIRDS. ARTHUR VAN SCHENDEL. Translated, M. STEVENS. Routledge. 7s. 6d.

A QUARTER OF a century ago Holland was so internationally minded and her people so enamoured of German, French, and English culture, that writers used those languages to write in instead of their native Dutch. The effect of a four years' siege to their neutrality reawoke a national spirit in the country and made an assessment of home values possible.

Arthur van Schendel led the way to a new Dutch literature by using in his novels the everyday idioms of ordinary "Hollandser" speech. He was immediately recognized as a great writer, not only in his own country, but abroad as well, and his lead is responsible for the many first-rate novels, really Dutch in feeling, treatment, and language, which are being written to-day.

Grey Birds, just translated exceedingly well into English, is like the circumscribed and still Dutch landscape itself. Kasper Valk is born with a strong sense of fate and not of God; he is aware always of the grey birds of Time and Chance which sit brooding over his life. He finds himself and his happiness in making plants grow and feels that he is part of the rich soil that bred him. He should have been a botanist, but circumstances force him into market gardening. His

Calvinist friends upbraid him for his lack of belief, for his charity to vagabonds and his industry on the Sabbath. . . .

His pagan faith and goodness are shaken over and over again by the evil and violence which come into his house with the step-brother whom he accidentally blinded when they were both boys. Yet the horror of the blind man's gradually going mad and the consequent tragedy cannot quite disturb the essential quiet of the book which is Holland itself as I have experienced and know it. To English readers this stillness may seem irritatingly static; the stillness of stagnant water. But that is a question of national temperament and not the failure of van Schendel's art. There are no mountain torrents or rushing rivers in Holland; only canals straight as a ruler'd line, whose flow is imperceptible. Only a Dutchman could end a book which has held violence and tragedy with such a paragraph as this:—

“The next morning Kasper Valk went into his garden again, and silently worked with his plants all through the daylight hours. Sometimes he stood up and looked round at the garden and the white house and remembered the things that had been. He knew that loneliness was waiting for him. But he still had one daughter who sat with him in the evenings.”

WINIFRED HOLMES

TRAVEL

PEAKS AND LAMAS. Marco Pallis. Cassell. 18s.

BALANCE IS A necessity to the mountaineer. Balance in the physical sense or he will receive an early “no

flowers " notice ; balance in his mental outlook or peaks and passes will dominate his mind to the exclusion of all else.

In the writing of books, the climber has to be even more careful. His accounts can so easily descend to the documented itinerary or, perhaps, questionably rise to the technicalities of traverses and chimneys, belays, chockstones and descents *en rappel*.

Even in its title, *Peaks and Lamas*, has a balance, a fine judgment between the physical and the mental, that makes it a far better book, for the " lay " reader, than many another account of Himalayan exploring.

Marco Pallis, in company with four others (including Colin Kirkus, one of the finest rock-climbers in the country) visited Bashahr, an Indian state north of the United Provinces, in 1933. Members of the party climbed Riwo Pargyul and Central Santopant'h—the latter a really difficult rock-peak of 21,000 feet. Three years later, a slightly amended party visited the borders of Tibet once again, attempting the peaks surrounding the Zemu Glacier. During this second expedition the climbing opportunities were equalled, for Pallis at least, by the searchings he could make into the roots of the Buddhist faith.

That is all there is to the book. There are no sensations ; feeling and ideas are as important as action. Yet *Peaks and Lamas* is a book to enjoy. For while Pallis is no stylist, while he occasionally drops to the cliché, and while some of his writing approaches the mediocre, there is a very definite readability about his book—even though almost a third of it is devoted to an exposition of the Buddhist's faith.

The ninety-five photogravure plates are good—as are

almost all illustrations in similar books; the climber would wish for a few more of the peaks and a few less of the lamas.

Nevertheless, Marco Pallis's book proves that a mountaineer need not fill his stories with interminable references to camps one to six, that a climber is something more than mere brawn and muscle, and that the old school tie, worn with discretion, can still be quite a useful asset in organizing a *bandobast*.

R. W. CLARK

ESCAPE TO THE SEA. FRED REBELL. Murray.
8s. 6d.

THE NOTE OF religious revelation that lies at the roots of a book like Mr. Rebell's *Escape to the Sea* (introduction by Mr. Richard Hughes) is not in itself unusual. Lone voyagings somehow arrive beyond mere geographical positions, they approach reaches of the human spirit. One finds this in such books of Arctic exploration as Cherry Garrard's classic, in the story of the wonderful being that was Birdie Bowers, as well as a more recent explorer like Admiral Byrd in his book *Alone*. And it is precisely this spiritual note in Rebell's book that marks it out quite distinctly from being a mere account of a single-handed voyage. Amazing as his story is, it belongs somehow to the more mysterious realms of the spirit. Rebell, a sturdy man who built his own boat, and the most amateur of amateur sailors, made all his own navigating instruments. But sheer inventiveness did not stop there for Mr. Rebell even made and issued his own passport. A man of anarchical tendencies he

had the audacity to inform the Passport officials that he considered it enough that a man possessed a body and a soul, without having a label attached to it. This man had visions and dreamed dreams. The story itself is extraordinary. He actually sailed 9,000 miles in an eighteen-foot open boat, incidentally with only a roadman's canvas hood for his shelter, a voyage that took over a year. Yet in a way it is a quiet book, perhaps too modest. And for an amateur writer Mr. Rebell never makes the mistake of over-reaching himself. What some readers would instinctively look for in *Escape to the Sea* does not lie within its pages. There are no spectacular accounts of the vagaries of the weather, storms or calms, no conventional and monotonous accounts of excursions to the tropic islands, though he visited many of these during his voyage. In fact Mr. Rebell's book is entirely deficient in the usual adventure stuff that one has come to associate with the amateur sailor, and he *was* amateur, a farmer by calling. Certainly in the course of his epic voyage he underwent the most amazing hardships, bad luck, yet again with that somewhat disarming modesty of his he seems to ignore them, for he barely mentions them. Instead he says "the body is the tool in the soul's hands".

Both publisher and introducer seem at pains to inform the reader of the "sub-human" and the "almost animal-like qualities" of the author of this book. But the spiritual note therein would seem to offset these conceptions of the author, and *Escape to the Sea* is the story and a brave one at that of super-, rather than "sub-human" endeavour. *Escape to the Sea* is a book for the Black Out if ever there was one.

JAMES HANLEY

BIRCHLAND. JORAN BIRKELAND. E. P. Dutton.
New York. Two dollars and fifty cents.

THE STORY OF the visit of an American-born girl to the Norway of her parents and of the conflict in her between the two worlds, is of a quality far beyond that of the average travel book. It deals with a problem that has never been so urgent as to-day when many must leave unwillingly one country for another. I know of few books on Norway that give so vivid and unusual an account of that interesting country; one will not easily forget Aunt Signy nor the visit to Lillehammer, and it is to be hoped that there will soon be an English edition of the volume.

ERNEST HUDSON

MUSIC

A KEY TO OPERA. FRANK HOWES and PHILIP HOPE-WALLACE. Blackie. 5s.

MOZART. ANNETTE KOLB. Translated by PHYLLIS and TREVOR BLEWITT, with an introduction by JEAN GIRAUDOUX. Illustrated. Gollancz. 16s.

IN *A Key to Opera*, the two authors have between them covered the ground thoroughly and conscientiously, even though they have sometimes had difficulty in seeing the wood for the trees. A pleasant bias is given to this handbook by the fact that the authors have assiduously followed up all recent amateur performances in England of out-of-the-way and half-forgotten operas, and the resulting emphasis laid on these operas causes

them to loom disproportionately large. This is valuable in so far as it brings home the fact that these operas have a proper musical value only when they are performed and not when their scores are laid away on a shelf. A critic should no more be allowed to assess the value of a piece of music which he has not heard than to criticize an opera or ballet, however well he knows the music, unless he has been present at an actual stage performance. These amateur performances of comparatively unknown operas therefore deserve all encouragement; and it is to be hoped that the war will not completely put an end to the initiative of the small societies responsible for their production.

In the case of *Mozart* by Miss Annette Kolb, we have Mozart's biography presented in the quasi-fictional form popularized some years ago by Lytton Strachey and André Maurois. Miss Kolb has had the good sense to rely mainly on the published letters of Mozart and his family for her material; and this method gives her account a vivid contemporaneity. She does not scruple to touch up the picture here and there, to add a high light where necessary and to cover the whole with a thin layer of not unpleasantly sentimental varnish. The French Minister of Propaganda has contributed an introduction, in which he states his conviction that "Mozart was German through and through, that the Germany he created began to disappear with him, and that it is idle to play Mozart in a country where that which *is* Mozart, that is to say, liberty, candour and joy, is lost". In short—a most suitable book for light bedside reading in the blackout.

ERIC WALTER WHITE

SELECTED BOOKS

THE DANGER OF BEING A GENTLEMAN.

H. J. LASKI. Allen and Unwin. 7s. 6d.

PROFESSOR LASKI ALWAYS writes with an intellectual wit and clarity, which is the outcome of true scholarship. He bridges the gap between the expert and the general public, because he sees his subject, however removed it may appear to be, in relation to the problems of his own time. In consequence, this collection of essays, though reprinted because "still asked for by students and friends", will reach a much wider public than that.

The essays are reprinted from various different sources and they cannot be said to have any deliberate unity, running through the book. Their unity, such as it is, depends on the fact that Professor Laski is largely concerned with one theme, the relation of Liberty to Authority in the State, and most of these papers touch on that problem in one part or another.

There is no space to criticize this book, but for the benefit of the reader, the essays are as follows:—*The Danger of Being a Gentleman* and *Mr. Justice Holmes* (reprinted from *Dangers of Obedience*, Harper), *The Study of Politics* (O.U.P.), *The Judicial Function* and *The English Constitution and French Public Opinion, 1789–1794* (Politica), *The Committee System in English Local Government* (from *A Century of Local Government*), *Nationalism and the Future of Civilization* (Conway Memorial Lecture), *Law and Justice in the Soviet Union*.

A. CALDER-MARSHALL

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EXPERIMENTS IN TELEPATHY. RENÉ WARCOLLIER. Edited and abridged by GARDNER MURPHY. Translated by JOSEPHINE E. GRIDLEY. Allen and Unwin. 7s. 6d.

THE STUDY OF telepathic phenomena has emerged from its initial stage which was looked upon by the higher developed branches of Science as an affair of amateurs and charlatans. Telepathy can now be classified together with other more familiar psychological facts. This is the impression gained from Warcollier's book, a collection of papers published in France during the years 1921-1936 on different aspects and experiments of so called telepathic transmission.

The investigation into the psychological side of the phenomenon reveals the decisive rôle of the unconscious part of the mind. Telepathy, far from being attached to a super-intellectual dimension, belongs to a state of mind which is more primitive than that of our conscious reasoning and acting. The best condition would be a state of sleep in both partners. A sleep-like state is most desirable: both partners must dismiss from their minds any conscious thought, desire or will, they must relax into as passive a state as possible. People can be trained to achieve such a high degree of passivity but the actual gift for telepathic perception cannot be acquired by training or learning. Telepathy requires an emotional relationship between the two partners: even strong antipathy is better than indifference.

Images only, not thoughts, are perceived in Telepathy. They seem to rise from the unconscious, their succession appears to be absurd and they often have a symbolic meaning, e.g. when a broken plate is perceived while the partner feels sorry about the cancellation of a dinner

FRANK SWINNERTON ON BOOK TOKENS



ON EVERY BIRTHDAY AND EVERY CHRISTMAS we receive hundreds of penwipers and abnormal ties, and many pounds of chocolates; but rarely—almost never—do we receive a book. Instead, with the fiftieth spotted neckerchief, a note: "I would have sent you a book, but couldn't think of a book you wanted." What a heart-rending confession of failure! and yet the problem need never again trouble anybody as long as civilization lasts.

YOU WOULD LIKE TO GIVE A BOOK? Very well, walk boldly into a bookshop and say, "I want a Book Token, please." Make no mistake; *the bookseller will be delighted*. He will not growl, "Oh, bother; can't you fuss and fluster for hours, trying to find something appropriate?" No, he will say, "Certainly. Do you want one for 3s. 6d., 5s., 7s. 6d., 10s. 6d., or 21s.?"

IT IS REALLY AS SIMPLE AS THAT. You decide how much you will spend; and you give the bookseller that amount of money, plus threepence only. In exchange, he hands you a most appetizing little folder. It is a Book Token, which includes a charming greeting card and bears stamps to the value of your purchase. It also conveys this message: "The gift is mine; the choice is thine."

THOSE WORDS MEAN THAT YOUR FRIEND can take the Token to any bookshop and exchange it for the book he prefers. And the thanks which reach you will be heartfelt and permanent. What a happy ending to a happy remembrance!

party. Drawings are of a primitive technique like small children's drawings. Those parts to which the one partner did not pay any attention are reproduced best by the other. This leads to the conclusion that the percipient participates in the less developed impressions of his partner's mind, that the less conscious layers of mind form one common whole.

If this conception be accepted, I should suggest dropping the misleading terms "telepathic transmission", "messages" and "agents"; it seems to be proved by the experiments that the process in question does not in the least compare with the active sending of a message by an agent.

The state of mind in which telepathic perception happens is very much like that which furnishes the best material in psycho-analysis. The study of Telepathy is apt to widen our knowledge of the nature of the unconscious and of the human mind in general.

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OLGA MARUM

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